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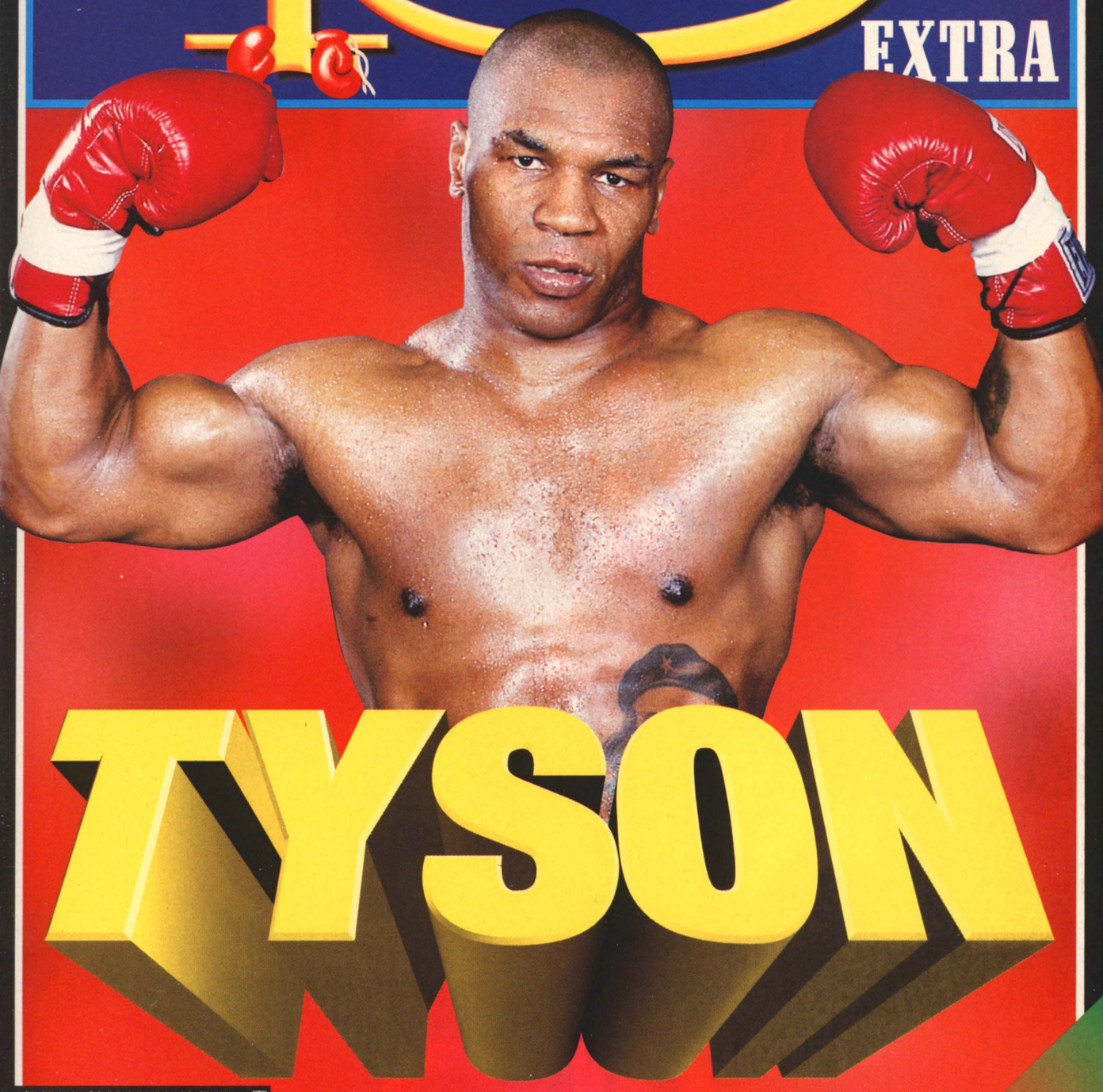

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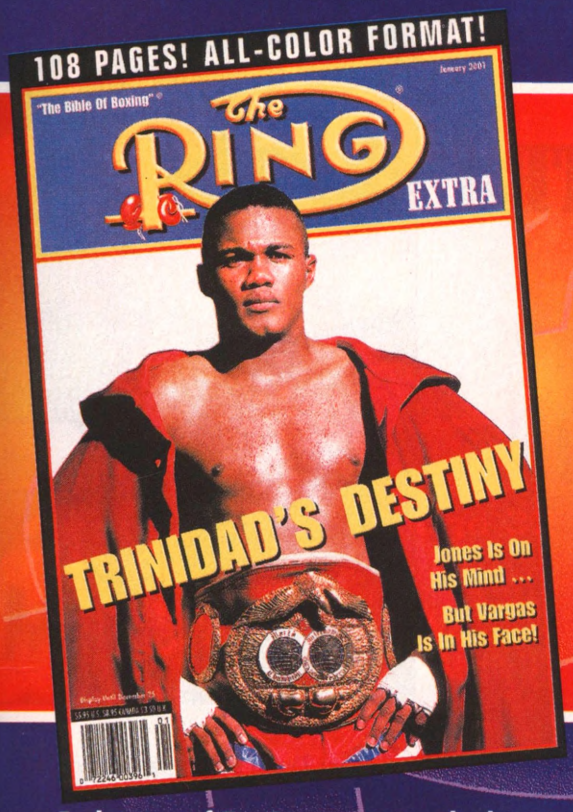

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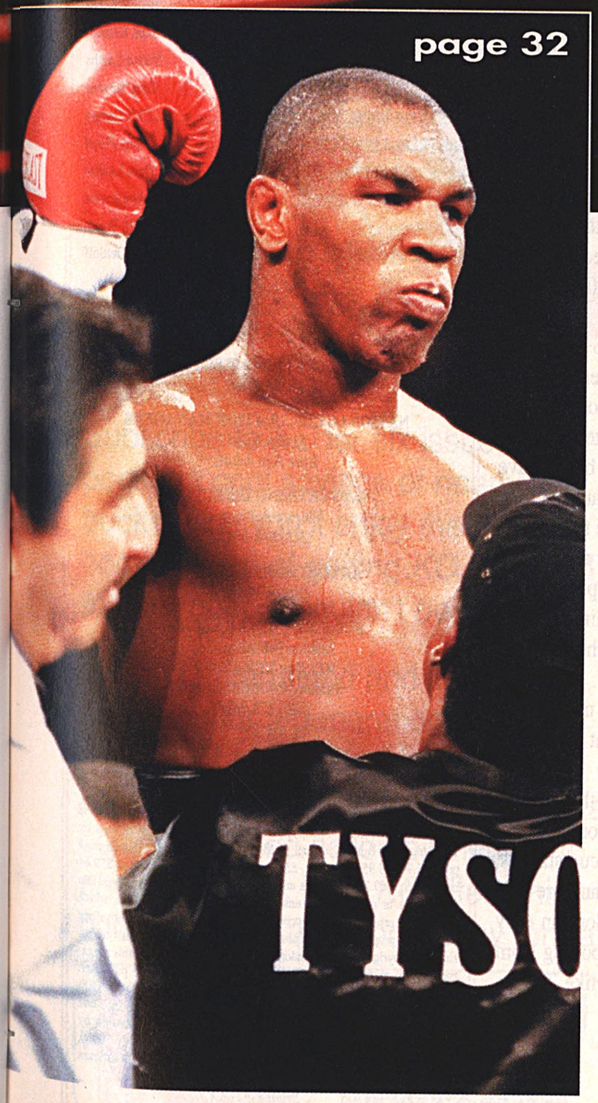

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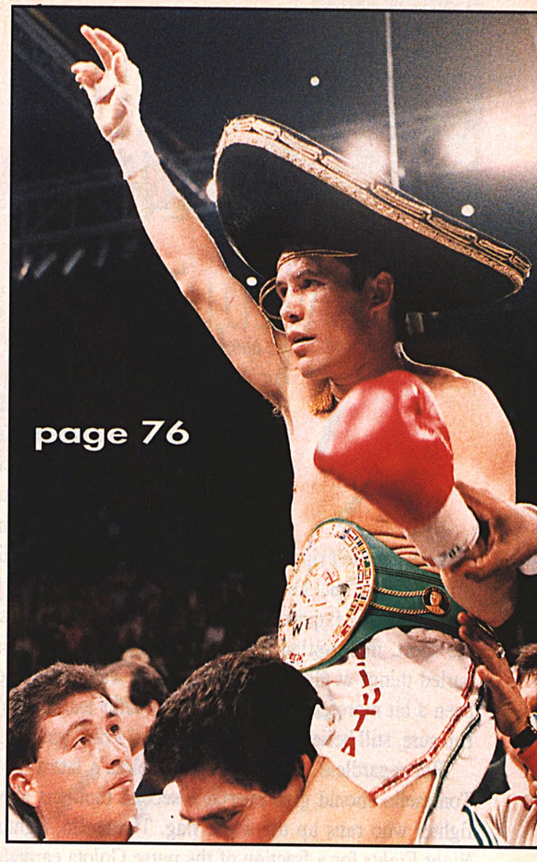

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PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Cover: *Tyson by Frank Vitucci*

Cover Design: *Joe Kalman*

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RINGSIDE

Celebrating victory is only half of boxing's equation. It's also our duty to experience the pain and suffering of the loser, to observe the degree of grace and courage with which the vanquished boxer endures defeat. We might not think about this too much, but we know it instinctively, and often respond in a highly emotional manner. The paying customers at The Palace of Auburn Hills didn't shower Andrew Golota with debris just because they felt ripped off by his capitulation. They did it because they believed, justifiably or not, that he'd violated the warrior's code by not going out on his shield.

Despite the important role this unwritten rule plays in maintaining the integrity of the sport, interpreting it can be a very tricky business indeed. Some of those who hurled things at Golota as he made his way out of the arena might now wish they'd been a bit more charitable, especially after learning the extent of his injuries. Others, I'm sure, still believe the troubled "Foul Pole" got exactly the send-off he deserved.

But regardless of your take on Golota's latest *no mas*, what happened to Bobby Tomasello should give everyone second thoughts about coming down too hard on a fighter who runs up the white flag. Tomasello, fighting the semifinal on the *Friday Night Fights* for a fraction of the purse Golota earned, died a few days after his fight with Steve Dotse, the victim of severe brain damage. Brave Tomasello lived up to the warrior's code and paid the ultimate price, but is death before dishonor really the doctrine we want to govern boxing?

It is illuminating to compare what happened to Golota and Tomasello to the fate of Emanuel Burton, a journeyman who fought Floyd Mayweather the day after the Mike Tyson-Golota and Dotse-Tomasello catastrophes. Even though he's lost almost as many fights as he's won, Burton is a skilled and proud professional, and despite the overwhelming odds against him, came to win. He never had a chance, of course, but he gave the multi-talented Mayweather a strenuous workout, bloodying his nose and battling back every time "Pretty Boy's" rapid-fire combinations threatened to end the fight.

As the rounds went by, Burton, his face bloody and swollen, fell farther and farther behind, but he never stopped trying, never stopped sacrificing himself in pursuit of a goal that probably only he believed he could achieve. Finally, in the ninth round, Burton was rescued by a caring corner and a wise referee, his honor and the honor of the sport more than upheld by his effort and their actions.

Burton was different than Golota in that he had the courage to do his utmost in a painful and hopeless cause. He was more fortunate than Tomasello in that his corner and the referee made his welfare their number-one priority.

There's really nothing new to be learned from what happened in the three fights under discussion. But the respective fates of Tomasello, Golota, and Burton certainly reinforced the long-held notion that fighters seldom know best in these circumstances. It's up to the people on the periphery, those who are not taking punches and are presumably clearheaded, to decide when a fighter has had enough. It's seldom an easy decision, but it's the most crucial call in the sport, the one that separates boxing from butchery. When that line becomes blurred, it can lead to an ugly farce like Tyson-Golota, or in the case of Dotse-Tomasello, something far worse.

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

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COME OUT WRITING

We welcome your letters, which may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

FIX THE JUDGING!

I am sitting at home waiting on the expected announcement by Jimmy Lennon Jr. that Johnny Tapia has won his rematch with Paulie Ayala, and I hear this: "And the winner is … Paulie Ayala." I'm sorry, but there is no way Ayala won that fight. Tapia outboxed Ayala and won that fight easily. I had Tapia winning the fight by three points, and that's with giving Ayala the benefit of the doubt on a couple of rounds. What is up with these three judges in Las Vegas and their inept scoring of a fight?

First, there was the Erik Morales-Marco Antonio Barrera fight, which is generally regarded as a fight Barrera won. Now this. Even in the year 2000, which by the way has been an outstanding year for the sport, boxing cannot escape the trend of questionable judging in high-profile fights.

Is boxing in the sports mainstream? Well, not yet. However, 2000 has been a good year with great fights like Barrera-Morales, Shane Mosley-Oscar De La Hoya, and Tony Ayala-Yory Boy Campas. Boxing is ready to make a long ascent back to the mainstream, where it rightfully belongs—if something can be done about the bogus officiating, of course.

MICHAEL WILSON
Fort Mill, SC

WHY THE HALL NOT!

The voting for the International Boxing Hall of Fame 2001 election will be coming soon, and I hope that this year Paul Pender will receive consideration from the voters.

He is a two-time world middleweight champion, winning the title from the great Sugar Ray Robinson on January 22, 1960. Then he became the only man to defeat the great Robinson in consecutive title fights. In his third successful defense, he won a 15-round decision over Carmen Basilio, after which Basilio retired.

Paul Pender should be a Hall of Famer, says reader John Flynn. Pender was the only fighter to beat the great Sugar Ray Robinson in consecutive title fights, and he retired Carmen Basilio.

He then lost the title to Terry Downes, but immediately regained it in a return bout. He announced his retirement soon after. His lifetime record is 40-6-2 (20), and 5-1 in championship fights.

Almost all of the champs from that great middleweight era of the 1950s and '60s, including Robinson, Bobo Olson, Gene Fullmer, Dick Tiger, Emile Griffith, Joey Giardello, and Nino Benvenuti, are enshrined. Why not Pender?

JOHN FLYNN
Rockland, MA

SWEET PEA JONES?

Every time I see Roy Jones fight, he's getting more and more like Pernell Whitaker: throw two or three punches, then grab and hold, over and over. Jones hasn't had a fight against anyone with the remotest chance of beating him, including the one who knocked him down and who actually couldn't punch his way out of a paper bag, Lou Del Valle. Jones also looks pooped usually by the 11th or 12th round. What if he had to go 15?

NICK D. ALIFANTIS
Tarpon Springs, FL

PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

Diego "Chico" Corrales, shown here beating Angel Manfredy, has lost some fans in Sacramento due to allegations that he beat his pregnant wife. Reader Patrick Brazil says he would much rather root for another Sacramento champ, WBC super bantam titlist Willie Jorrin.

ALL-WORLD ATLAS

I watch ESPN2's *Friday Night Fights* every chance I get. The reason: Teddy Atlas. Mr. Atlas provides us with great insight and knowledge about the fight game. His straight-forward approach is outstanding. After hearing Teddy speak, you come to realize that boxing is truly an art.

FREDDY MARRATTO
Palm Springs, CA

CHICO IS NO MAN

I live near Sacramento, California, and for the last few years I have been rooting for Diego "Chico" Corrales. I have followed his career, and even attended a few of his fights. He is an excellent fighter, but I just cannot back him any longer.

Any man who hits a woman, as Corrales allegedly did to his wife this past summer, is not a man at all, but a coward and a felon. And any guy who beats up a pregnant woman should be incarcerated a very long time!

To me, there is only one boxing champion in Sacramento, and that is WBC super bantamweight champ Willie Jorrin. I have met Willie on a few occasions, and he is gracious and friendly to his fans. He is also a husband and father who loves and respects his wife and children; he doesn't beat them.

Willie is our true Sacramento champion.

PATRICK BRAZIL
Rocklin, CA

KAYO HBO

The fact that HBO has deemed WBO mandatory challenger Istvan "Koko" Kovacs as an unworthy opponent for Prince Naseem Hamed's featherweight crown is an absolute disgrace. While I'll admit I've never seen Kovacs fight professionally, the reality of the matter is that Kovacs was a sensational amateur who topped off his career with a gold medal at the 1996 Olympic Games, and as a pro has taken down everyone his promoters have put in front of him. Those facts notwithstanding, the HBO commentators wrote him off as a complete nobody during their telecast of the Hamed-Augie Sanchez fight. Apparently, the HBO corporate brass has done the same thing, since they are not willing to pay for this fight to take place on their network.

Everyone knows that if the mandatory challenger in question was an American '96 gold medalist who hadn't really fought anybody in his rise to a mandatory position, HBO would still be frothing at the mouth to make the fight for their golden boy. But when that golden boy comes from foreign soil, as is the case with Kovacs, they write him off as unfit for broadcast. Who did Fernando Vargas, a 1996 Olympian, really face other than a faded Anthony Stephens to get a title shot against Yory Boy Campas? But HBO was dying to make that fight!

I think it's a shameful act on their part to shaft one '96 Olympian from getting a title shot, when they've facilitated so many others who I dare say were as similarly unproven as Kovacs. If they're going to start drawing the line as to who's fit and who's not for an HBO title shot, they should have started with Ricky Frazier, not with an accomplished '96 Olympic gold medalist. That's just pathetic.

PAUL HABERMAN
Washington, D.C.

[Editor's note: Hamed has relinquished the WBO title, choosing a big-money fight against Marco Antonio Barrera over a defense against Kovacs.] ■

ROUND ONE

FLOYD FILLS OSCAR'S VOID

After months of deliberation and speculation as to who his new trainer would be, Oscar De La Hoya made the surprise announcement in October that he was selecting Floyd Mayweather to replace Robert Alcazar. De La Hoya had considered a number of possibilities, most seriously Emanuel Steward and Joe Goossen, before chosing Mayweather, who has gained a high profile in the sport as much for his bitter feud with his son, the WBC super featherweight champion of the same name, as for his considerable talents as a cornerman. Mayweather said he believed De La Hoya, with his help, can take his game to another level.

"Oscar told me he is willing to give me 100 percent and to do what I say," Mayweather said. "He has a lot of talent that people haven't seen yet. He's needed someone to bring that out of him. That someone is going to be me."

There was some irony in the move as Mayweather is closely aligned with Top Rank, the promoters whom De La Hoya has sued in an effort to get out of his contract. Mayweather said he isn't concerned about that. He said he is his own man and would make working with De La Hoya his priority.

Mayweather has a reputation as a defensive guru, but he said one of the issues he will stress with De La Hoya is conditioning.

"If a fighter is in top condition, he won't fade down the stretch," Mayweather said. "Sometimes, too much training is like being undertrained. You have to hit the right balance. I'll get Oscar to the point where he can go hard all night. He's going to be a guy who is going to get stronger in the later rounds, not weaker."

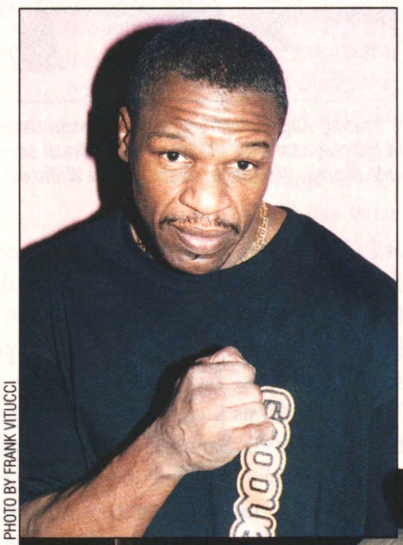


PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

PHOTO BY BRENT COOK

Mayweather (top) vows to work on De La Hoya's conditioning

He said De La Hoya could have easily won his bout with Shane Mosley last June had he been in better condition, though De La Hoya had boasted in the days before the fight about his conditioning. A lack of conditioning can often be seen as a fighter who doesn't care, but Mayweather said he would not have taken the job if he wasn't certain De La Hoya is committed to boxing. He believes a committed De La Hoya will be difficult to beat.

"The kid has a lot of speed, but he has never been taught to move his head," Mayweather said. "I'm going to teach him the ins and outs of this game. He's going to learn so much from me, it's going to be unbelievable to him. When he gets in the gym, we're going to have a plan to get him better day by day. He's got the raw tools, and my job is to show him how to use them to his best advantage. When he fights Shane Mosley again, it's going to be like a different fighter in there."

The younger Mayweather, who fired his father as trainer and evicted him from a Las Vegas home he owned, endorsed De La Hoya's move.

"I think my father will be good for Oscar," Mayweather said.

—Kevin Iole

TRAGEDY IN BOSTON

While Andrew Golota didn't stick around long enough against Mike Tyson to throw one of his trademark low blows, another shot below the belt did jar the boxing community that Friday night. Some thousand miles east, in a small venue in Boston, a young man heroically compensated for everything Golota deprived us of, but paid the price for his bravery.

At the same time as most of the boxing world's attention was focused on Tyson and Golota, doctors at the New England Medical Center were in the midst of emergency surgery to remove blood clots that had formed in 25-year-old featherweight Bobby Tomasello's brain, but their efforts were unsuccessful. The fact that Tomasello courageously fought to a controversial draw with Ghana's Steve Dotse became an afterthought the moment the prognosis was delivered. While Tomasello's heart withstood the onslaught from Dotse, his brain, unfortunately, did not. Two days after the bout, he was diagnosed with brain failure. Shortly thereafter, he was taken off life support, and passed away at 11:45 a.m. on Wednesday, October 25.

"The doctor [Patti Joffe] said that it happened sometime early in the fight," said trainer Norman Stone. "He took some punishment at some point and it knocked his brain to the side. Basically, it twisted his brain. It was a freak incident, the kind that the doctor said happens once in a million years."

The fight was a competitive slugfest through the first eight rounds, but by the time Tomasello's first-ever round nine rolled around, fatigue had settled in. Dotse rattled Tomasello in the waning moments of the round, and floored him twice in the 10th (although one was officially ruled a slip). With Tomasello appearing out on his feet after the last knockdown, referee Mike Ryan made a highly questionable decision to allow the fight to continue, and Tomasello heroically survived the last few seconds to finish the fight.

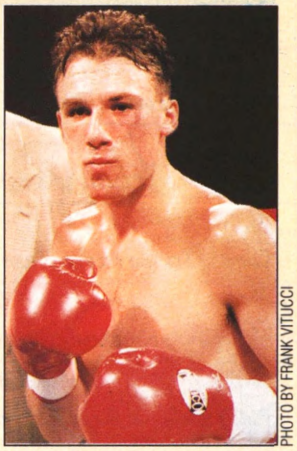


PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

Tomasello was all heart

Five minutes later, after complaining of a headache, Tomasello collapsed in the dressing room.

"I went to get the doctor, and when I had come back, he had collapsed," recalled Stone. "I had him in my arms and he threw up all over himself."

After being rushed from The Roxy on a stretcher, the real fight was on. Tomasello was doomed by the same commodity that ultimately defined him.

"He had a big heart," said his grieving manager, Anthony Cardinale. "Too much heart for his own good."

—Ted Bodenrader

YOU GO, GIRL!

As long as Laila Ali, Jacqui Frazier-Lyde, and Mia St. John are stealing all the headlines from real fighters like Lucia Rijker, women's boxing will never be perceived as anything more than a sideshow. And that's a shame. Among the many strengths of the compelling film *Girlfight*, which made its way into theaters in October and should be available on video in early-2001, most notable is the way it presents women's boxing as a serious sport, regardless of what pro boxing's promoters would have the public think.

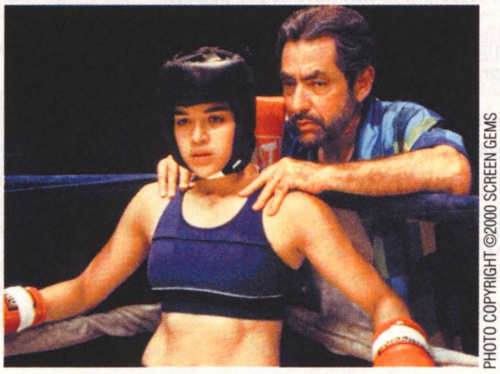


PHOTO COPYRIGHT ©2000 SCREEN GEMS

Hector preps Diana for battle

Writer/director Karyn Kusama's debut film tells the story of hot-tempered, rebellious high schooler Diana Guzman (played with remarkable emotional range by first-time actress Michelle Rodriguez), who finds discipline and direction in a Brooklyn boxing gym. Her trainer, Hector (also brilliantly portrayed by Jaime Tirelli), is reluctant at first to impart his knowledge on a girl, but once he realizes that Diana is serious, she becomes his primary focus at the gym, and is soon pushed into sparring with the boys.

That's where the film loses a bit of its credibility. The problem is not so much that a girl is seen beating up on the boys; that's perfectly conceivable. But it's a bit hard to believe that a girl who's only been training for a few months is defeating guys who have been at it for years, including her own boyfriend, who is skilled enough that he is being groomed to turn pro, but not skilled enough to avoid being knocked down and defeated by Diana. Still, Diana's assorted relationships—with Hector, with her boyfriend, with her brother, and with her pathetic father—make for powerful drama, and the training and fight scenes are as realistic as you'll ever see coming out of Hollywood.

Girlfight is not about the women who box just to make money; it's about the women who box because they need it in their lives, the ones who make it every bit as much of a sport as the men's game.

—Eric Raskin

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
10-13-00	Lamar Murphy W 10 Daniel Alicea	ESPN2	l	C	B	B
Murphy pulls out a close one in tight, action-packed fight; Alicea better than expected						
10-13-00	Dana Rosenblatt W 12 Will McIntyre	ESPN2	sm	C+	C-	D-
Unless someone tosses up a right hand and Rosenblatt walks into it, a title shot is on the way						
10-20-00	Alex Trujillo W 10 Jose Luis Juarez	PPV	l	C	C+	C+
Talented Trujillo recovers from near disastrous fourth-round knockdown to box to solid victory						
10-20-00	Laila Ali W 6 Kendra Lenhart	PPV	sm	F	D+	C-
We know it's blasphemous, but will someone tell the producers to keep the camera off of Dad at ringside?						
10-20-00	**Zab Judah KO 8 Hector Quiroz**	**PPV**	**IBF jw**	**A**	**D**	**D+**
Judah stinks out the joint in pedestrian win over pedestrian fighter; Zab, you sure you want Tszyu?						
10-20-00	Mike Tyson KO 3 Andrew Golota	PPV	h	A	B+	D-
Oh, don't act so surprised						
10-20-00	Steve Dotse D 10 Bobby Tomasello	ESPN2	jl	C	B	B
At first we thought the decision was tragic; we learned later what tragic really is						
10-20-00	Victor Polo W 12 Angel Vazquez	ESPN2	f	B+	B	D+
If you suspected Vazquez would flop when he approached a title shot, you were right; Polo dominant						
10-20-00	Charles Shufford W 10 Lamon Brewster	HBO	h	C+	B+	C
*Brewster 0-for-2 on **KO Nation**, and where have Shufford and that jab been hiding?*						
10-20-00	Floyd Mayweather KO 9 Emanuel Burton	HBO	l	A	D	B+
We don't know if Mayweather is better with Uncle Roger training him, but he sure is more exciting						
10-22-00	Juan Manuel Marquez KO 3 Reynante Jamili	Uni	f	B-	D	C+
Marquez didn't vanish after losing to Fred Norwood after all; when will somebody else give this guy a shot?						
10-22-00	Robbie Peden W 12 Edgar Barcenas	FOXSN	jl	C	C+	B-
Peden slices open Barcenas' eye late, takes close win to stay alive at 130 pounds						
10-22-00	Eliecer Castillo W 12 Wolfgramm	FOXSN	h	D+	C	C-
You'd have thought Wolfgramm's biggest problem is his weight; it isn't						
10-27-00	Juan Lazcano KO 8 Dorin Spivey	ESPN2	l	B-	C-	C+
Spivey tough, but not in the same league as fast-rising Lazcano; title shot looms for "Hispanic Causing Panic"						
11-3-00	Victoriano Sosa W 10 Harold Warren	ESPN2	l	C+	C-	C
Sosa a major-league hitter, but why does he insist on going to sleep in the second half in every major fight?						
11-3-00	James Toney KO 3 Courtney Butler	ESPN2	h	B	D-	B-
Hey, all you fitness nuts: Toney gets fatter every time out, but there's no one we'd rather have watching our backs						
11-4-00	Hector Camacho Jr. W 10 Joe Hutchinson	HBO	jw	B	C-	D-
Who would have thought that being really annoying and boring would turn out to be hereditary?						
11-4-00	**Shane Mosley KO 6 Antonio Diaz**	**HBO**	**WBC w**	**A**	**B-**	**B+**
Why is Mosley the pound-for-pound king? He is what Roy Jones would be if Jones fought with passion						

Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime; FOXSN—Fox SportsNet; Uni—Univision; Tel—Telemundo

"POCKET ROCKET" GROUNDED?

PHOTO BY DOUGLAS WARD/RINGSIDE

Is McCullough's career over?

Wayne McCullough faces the possible end of his boxing career after the British Boxing Board of Control ordered the cancellation of his homecoming fight in Belfast on October 20 because of a failed routine brain scan.

The former WBC bantamweight titleholder was due to face Hungarian Sandor Koczak at the Ulster Hall in preparation for a proposed challenge against IBF featherweight champion Paul Ingle in the summer of 2001. But an MRI revealing a cyst, two centimeters in length, on McCullough's brain forced Board of Control general secretary Simon Block to inform the Belfast promoters that the 10-round bout would not be allowed to take place. A subsequent brain scan performed in a Dublin hospital was said by a doctor to reveal "no significant" irregularity, and at press time the 30-year-old McCullough was returning to his base in Las Vegas, where he would seek a definitive diagnosis.

"At the moment I just don't know which scan to believe," said McCullough, devastated by a medical report that jeopardizes a career that had just gotten back on track last summer when he signed a new three-fight deal with America Presents. "I don't know where I stand right now. My health is obviously the most important thing. If there's anything life-threatening, then I should be in the hospital. But at this moment I just don't know the truth."

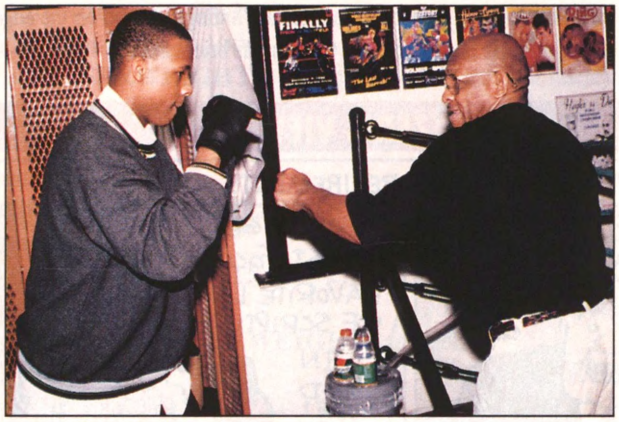
McCullough insists that he will never climb into a boxing ring if he is considered unfit by the proper authorities, but expressed his confusion over the ambiguity surrounding the two separate scans. He was also critical of the BBBC, who waited six days after the first scan was performed in a hospital in Belfast before informing him of the shock result.

"They knew I'd be sparring and allowed me to carry on as normal, possibly putting my life on the line," he added.

McCullough's last fight was a brutal encounter in October '99 against Mexican powerpuncher Erik Morales, who inflicted a 12-round beating. The 1992 Olympic silver medalist at bantamweight has an overall career mark of 23-3 (14).

—Brian Doogan

BACK IN THE SWING



Perkins gives student Drake Murray some pointers

In the 1930s, '40s, and '50s, high school boxing rivaled basketball and other sports on the prep sports calendars in several U.S. states. But it gradually faded out, supplanted by wrestling, golf, soccer, and other sports considered safer and more respectable. Now, in several private high schools in Chicago, boxing is making a strong comeback.

Leading the way is Leo High School, on the city's south side, with an all-male facility financed entirely by alumni contributions. In the '70s, Bob Foster—not the former world light heavyweight champion, but a member of the Leo Class of '58 who later became school principal and now is president of the 75-year-old, 360-student institution—started a boxing program there that produced John Collins, who went on to become a middleweight contender a decade later.

That program eventually died out, but in October of last year, it was resurrected by Leo English teacher Dan O'Keefe and Mike Joyce, another Leo alum and a former professional boxer who's now an attorney. They brought in as coaches former world 140-pound champion Eddie Perkins and ex-lightweight contenders Luther Rawlings and Herman Mills, to whom Foster gives much of the credit for the popularity and kudos the program has earned.

"They're great, great role models for the kids," Foster said. "These guys are fantastic men, and the kids can see from them how it's possible to have a certain gentleness and still be involved in boxing."

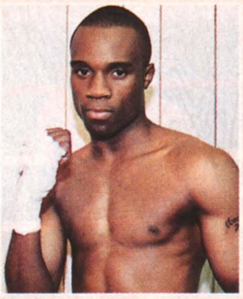
Under their leadership, Leo's intermural boxing program, stressing self-defense and ring fundamentals, was a great success last year in its inaugural season.

"The kids love it," said Peter Doyle, current Leo principal. "We converted an old classroom into a gym, and the whole operation is first-class. This season we think we're going to fight two other local schools with high school boxing, Mt. Carmel and St. Rita's."

Adds Foster: "It just proves that when it's run by the right people, boxing is a safe and wonderful sport."

—Pete Ehrmann

OUTSIDE THE ROPES



Harris: Survives stabbing

The World Boxing Hall of Fame in California held its annual induction ceremony on October 21, enshrining 12 new members: **Wilfredo Gomez**, **Ken Buchanan**, **Barry McGuigan**, and **Ralph Dupas** in the boxer category; **Tommy Burns**, **Pete Sanstol**, **Lou Bogash**, and **Eddie Booker** in the posthumous category; and **Emanuel Steward**, **Richard Steele**, **J Russell Peltz**, and **Allan Malamud** in the expanded category … Two legal settlements to report this month: Former middleweight champion **Joey Giardello** received an undisclosed sum from the makers of the film *The Hurricane*, in which Giardello's 1964 victory over **Rubin "Hurricane" Carter** was inaccurately depicted as a robbery; and a settlement was reached between **Frank Warren**, the BBC, and **Naseem Hamed** over allegations Hamed made regarding Warren during a BBC interview. Warren was awarded undisclosed damages … Junior welterweight contender **Vivian Harris** survived a frightening incident in early-October when, just days before a scheduled ESPN2 appearance, he was stabbed in the stomach trying to exit a Brooklyn store during an armed robbery. He underwent emergency surgery, and was reported to be making a swift recovery … Former WBA heavyweight champion **Tony Tubbs** pled guilty to drug trafficking in early-October, and was doing time in a Cincinnati jail as we went to press. The length of his sentence had not yet been determined as of this writing … The New South Grill, an Atlanta restaurant owned by **Evander Holyfield**, was shut down in late-September after their rent had reportedly not been paid in three months. "We never had the business," said chef and general manager **John Akhile** … Just days before his 30th birthday, former WBC featherweight champion **Goyo Vargas**, 40-7-1 (28), surprisingly announced his retirement in mid-October. "I know that Goyo has had a tremendous personal situation to deal with for the last six months," said promoter **Dan Goossen** regarding the reason for Vargas' decision … There were several deaths in the boxing community this month, the most notable being the sudden passing of former British and European featherweight champion **Howard Winstone** in late-September at age 61. Welshman Winstone challenged **Vicente Saldivar** for the world featherweight title three times between '65 and '67, but came up short each time … Duva Boxing publicist **Divena Freeman**, often a tremendous help to the staff here at THE RING, died tragically in late-October from injuries suffered when her car plunged off a bridge near her home in New Jersey. The bilingual Freeman, 49, was known especially for her help facilitating conversations between Spanish-speaking boxers and the American media … In another automobile tragedy, **Erik Goossen**, son of **Pat Goossen** and nephew of Dan and **Joe Goossen**, died in mid-October in a one-car accident outside Los Angeles. Goossen, 34, fought professionally as a junior welterweight in the mid-'80s … Four months after a freak sparring accident, Argentine lightweight **Sergio Ariel Soto**, 26, died in mid-October in a Buenos Aires hospital. Soto had gone into a coma shortly after being knocked down in a sparring session and hitting his head on the edge of the ring. He had a record of 0-6-1 in his brief career.

Winstone: Dies at 61

THE PUNCHLINES

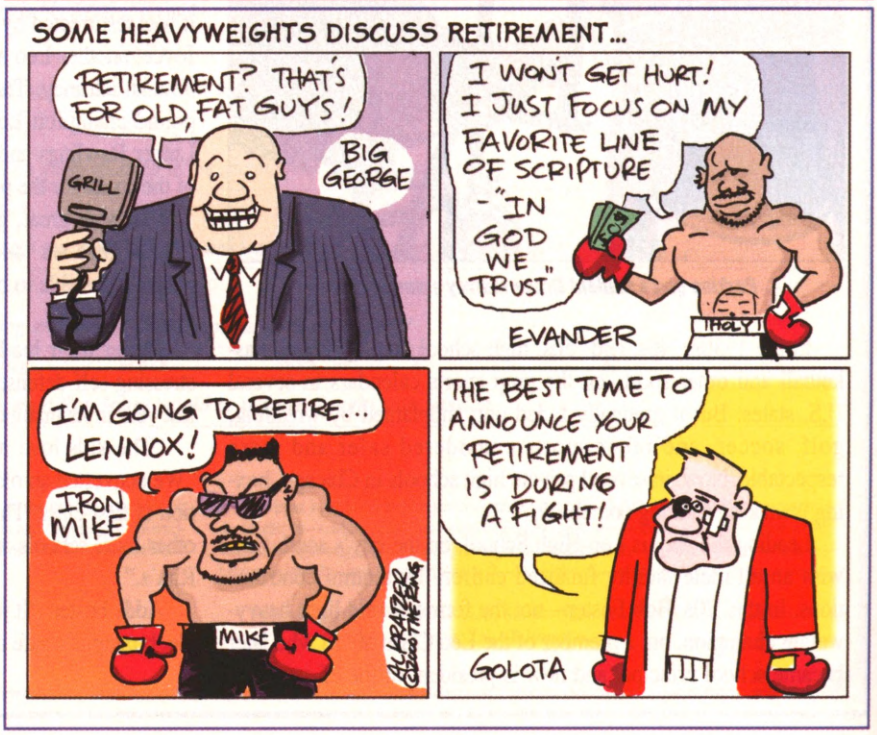
"If Floyd had shut his mouth and just minded his own business, we would still have fought, but the passion wasn't going to be there like it is now."

—Diego Corrales, after likely future opponent Floyd Mayweather made nasty comments about Corrales' alleged wife beating

"Call me a heartless cynic, but it seems Golota's symptoms got worse when it appeared he wasn't going to get his $2.1-million. I know that would make me sick."

—*New York Daily News* boxing writer Tim Smith, on Andrew Golota's medical reports released a couple of days after his surrender against Mike Tyson

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



"THE BIBLE OF BOXING"

RATINGS ANALYSIS

(For period ended November 7, 2000)

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **SHANE MOSLEY** Welterweight
2. **ROY JONES** Light Heavyweight
3. **FELIX TRINIDAD** Junior Middleweight
4. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA** Welterweight
5. **DIEGO CORRALES** Junior Lightweight
6. **NASEEM HAMED** Featherweight
7. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER** Junior Lightweight
8. **ERIK MORALES** Featherweight
9. **FERNANDO VARGAS** Junior Middleweight
10. **LENNOX LEWIS** Heavyweight

HEAVYWEIGHTS: Mike Tyson jumps from fifth to third following his TKO of Andrew Golota (formerly ninth), who exits. Wladimir Klitschko debuts at sixth on the strength of his points win over Chris Byrd, who slides from eighth to 10th.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: No changes.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: No changes.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No changes.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No changes.

WELTERWEIGHTS: Thomas Damgaard (eighth last issue) and Shannan Taylor (formerly seventh) switch places following Damgaard's decision win over Alessandro Duran to capture the European title.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: Antonio Diaz retains his number-four ranking despite his loss to Shane Mosley at 147 pounds.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: WBA champion Takanori Hatakeyama advances from sixth to fourth thanks to his exciting defense against Hiroyuki Sakamoto, which causes Cesar Bazan (fourth last issue) and Angel Manfredy (formerly fifth) to fall one spot each.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: Goyo Vargas (ninth last issue) is gone after announcing his retirement. Vargas' departure allows Roberto Garcia to move from 10th to ninth and John Brown to return in the 10th position.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: Manny Pacquaio progresses from ninth to seventh due to his victory over Nedal Hussein, bypassing Antonio Cermeno. Wayne McCullough (fifth last issue) hasn't fought in more than a year and has been dropped from the ratings. The Irishman's future is also in doubt due to a troubling brain scan. His departure makes room for Michael Brodie to come aboard at 10th.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: Paulie Ayala (second last issue) and Tim Austin (first last issue) trade places due to the superior quality of Ayala's opponents. Cuauhtemoc Gomez' TKO loss to Ricardo Barajas drops the Mexican veteran from fifth to 10th. This allows Johnny Bredahl, Adan Vargas, and Jorge Lacierva to move up one place each to fifth, sixth, and seventh, respectively. Rafael Marquez (10th last issue) leaves to make room for Barajas (now eighth).

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: No changes. However, if top-rated but inactive Mark Johnson doesn't fight by the next issue, he will be dropped.

FLYWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: IBF champion Ricardo Lopez has been inactive for more than a year, but retains the number-one position because he's scheduled to fight December 2 on the Felix Trinidad-Fernando Vargas card.

STRAWWEIGHTS: Former WBA titlist Chana Porpaoin slides from third to fifth after drawing with unranked journeyman Ernesto Rubillar.

POUND-FOR-POUND: Mosley's dazzling performance against Diaz in his first defense of the WBC belt keeps "Sugar Shane" on top of the heap. ■

THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended November 7, 2000

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Shane Mosley stayed atop the pound-for-pound list by whipping Antonio Diaz

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

In each division, fighters are ranked according to their abilities and accomplishments.

Being champion does not necessarily mean a fighter will be rated at the top of his weight class.

These ratings reflect how the best fighters in the world rate against one another.

Ratings By The Editors

Records By Fight Fax Inc.

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

1. **LENNOX LEWIS** England *37-1-1 (WBC/IBF Champ)*
2. **DAVID TUA** New Zealand *37-1*
3. **MIKE TYSON** Catskill, NY *49-3*
4. **KIRK JOHNSON** Canada *30-0-1*
5. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD** Fairburn, GA *37-4-1 (WBA Champ)*
6. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO** Ukraine *35-1*
7. **OLEG MASKAEV** Staten Island, NY *20-3*
8. **MICHAEL GRANT** Norristown, PA *31-1*
9. **HASIM RAHMAN** Baltimore, MD *34-2*
10. **CHRIS BYRD** Flint, MI *31-2*

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

1. **FELIX TRINIDAD** Puerto Rico *38-0 (WBA Champ)*
2. **FERNANDO VARGAS** Oxnard, CA *20-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **DAVID REID** Philadelphia, PA *14-1*
4. **IKE QUARTEY** Ghana *34-2-1*
5. **FRANCISCO CASTILLEJO** Spain *51-4 (WBC Champ)*
6. **HARRY SIMON** Namibia *20-0*
7. **WINKY WRIGHT** St. Petersburg, FL *40-3*
8. **BRONCO McKART** Monroe, MI *42-3*
9. **YORY BOY CAMPAS** Mexico *75-4*
10. **TONY MARSHALL** Albany, NY *34-8-6*

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

1. **NASEEM HAMED** England *35-0*
2. **ERIK MORALES** Mexico *38-0*
3. **PAUL INGLE** England *23-1 (IBF Champ)*
4. **DERRICK GAINER** Pensacola, FL *34-5 (WBA Champ)*
5. **GUTY ESPADAS** Mexico *33-2 (WBC Champ)*
6. **JOHNNY TAPIA** Albuquerque, NM *48-2-2*
7. **FRED NORWOOD** St. Louis, MO *37-1-1*
8. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ** Mexico *33-2*
9. **MANUEL MEDINA** Mexico *58-11*
10. **MBULELO BOTILE** South Africa *26-1*

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

1. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA** Mexico *51-3*
2. **BONES ADAMS** Henderson, KY *40-3-3 (WBA Champ)*
3. **LEHLO LEDWABA** South Africa *31-1-1 (IBF Champ)*
4. **WILLIE JORRIN** Sacramento, CA *27-0 (WBC Champ)*
5. **NESTOR GARZA** Mexico *38-2*
6. **ENRIQUE SANCHEZ** Mexico *28-1-1*
7. **MANNY PACQUAIO** Philippines *29-2*
8. **ANTONIO CERMENO** Venezuela *38-3*
9. **OSCAR LARIOS** Mexico *38-2-1*
10. **MICHAEL BRODIE** England *29-1*

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

1. **PAULIE AYALA** Ft. Worth, TX *31-1 (WBA Champ)*
2. **TIM AUSTIN** Cincinnati, OH *21-0-1 (IBF Champ)*
3. **VEERAPOL SAHAPROM** Thailand *27-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **JORGE ELIECER JULIO** Colombia *42-2*
5. **JOHNNY BREDAHL** Denmark *47-2*
6. **ADAN VARGAS** Mexico *34-2-1*
7. **JORGE LACIERVA** Mexico *18-3-3*
8. **RICARDO BARAJAS** Mexico *21-1-1*
9. **MAURICIO MARTINEZ** Panama *18-3-1*
10. **CUAUHTEMOC GOMEZ** Mexico *48-8*

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

1. **JUAN CARLOS GOMEZ**
   Germany *31-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **VASSILIY JIROV**
   Kazakhstan *26-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **FABRICE TIOZZO**
   France *42-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **JOHNNY NELSON**
   England *38-12-1*
5. **MARCELO DOMINGUEZ**
   Argentina *30-3-1*
6. **ARTHUR WILLIAMS**
   Pensacola, FL *33-5-1*
7. **CARL THOMPSON**
   England *27-5*
8. **JAMES TONEY**
   Las Vegas, NV *60-4-2*
9. **VIRGIL HILL**
   Bismarck, ND *45-3*
10. **LOUIS AZILLE**
    Jersey City, NJ *14-0-2*

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 175 pounds

1. **ROY JONES**
   Pensacola, FL *43-1 (WBC/WBA/IBF Champ)*
2. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI**
   Germany *42-0*
3. **ERIC HARDING**
   Philadephia, PA *19-1-1*
4. **REGGIE JOHNSON**
   Houston, TX *40-6-1*
5. **DAVID TELESCO**
   Port Chester, NY *23-3*
6. **MONTELL GRIFFIN**
   Chicago, IL *39-3*
7. **CHRIS JOHNSON**
   Canada *25-1-1*
8. **ANTONIO TARVER**
   Orlando, FL *16-1*
9. **GREG WRIGHT**
   Bronx, NY *18-6-2*
10. **DERRICK HARMON**
    Chicago, IL *20-1*

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

1. **SVEN OTTKE**
   Germany *20-0 (IBF Champ)*
2. **JOE CALZAGHE**
   Wales *29-0*
3. **BRUNO GIRARD**
   France *38-3-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **DINGAAN THOBELA**
   South Africa *40-7-2 (WBC Champ)*
5. **CHARLES BREWER**
   Philadelphia, PA *35-7*
6. **THOMAS TATE**
   Houston, TX *38-6*
7. **GLENN CATLEY**
   England *26-4*
8. **BYRON MITCHELL**
   Ozark, AL *21-1-1*
9. **JAMES BUTLER**
   Bronx, NY *17-1*
10. **MARKUS BEYER**
    Germany *18-1*

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

1. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
   Philadelphia, PA *37-2-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **WILLIAM JOPPY**
   Washington, D.C. *31-1-1 (WBA Champ)*
3. **KEITH HOLMES**
   Washington, D.C. *35-2 (WBC Champ)*
4. **ANTWUN ECHOLS**
   Davenport, IA *24-3-1*
5. **ARMAND KRAJNC**
   Sweden *24-0*
6. **HASSINE CHERIFI**
   France *30-4-1*
7. **BRIAN BARBOSA**
   Passaic, NJ *28-4*
8. **ANDREW COUNCIL**
   Washington, D.C. *30-7-3*
9. **SYD VANDERPOOL**
   Canada *28-2*
10. **HOWARD EASTMAN**
    England *30-0*

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

1. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Pomona, CA *36-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Whittier, CA *32-2*
3. **VERNON FORREST**
   Atlanta, GA *31-0*
4. **JAMES PAGE**
   Pittsburg, CA *25-3*
5. **OBA CARR**
   Detroit, MI *51-3-1*
6. **WILFREDO RIVERA**
   Puerto Rico *31-4-1*
7. **THOMAS DAMGAARD**
   Denmark *22-0*
8. **SHANNAN TAYLOR**
   Australia *28-0-1*
9. **DERRELL COLEY**
   Capitol Heights, MD *34-2-2*
10. **ANDREW LEWIS**
    Guyana *19-0-1*

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

1. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Australia *25-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **ZAB JUDAH**
   Brooklyn, NY *25-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **SHARMBA MITCHELL**
   Washington, D.C. *47-2 (WBA Champ)*
4. **ANTONIO DIAZ**
   Coachella, CA *33-3*
5. **ENER JULIO**
   Colombia *21-3*
6. **RANDALL BAILEY**
   Miami, FL *21-1*
7. **TERRONN MILLETT**
   St. Louis, MO *22-2-1*
8. **MICKY WARD**
   Lowell, MA *35-10*
9. **REGGIE GREEN**
   Clinton, MD *33-4*
10. **HECTOR CAMACHO JR**
    Puerto Rico *30-0*

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

1. **JOSE LUIS CASTILLO**
   Mexico *41-4-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **STEVE JOHNSTON**
   Denver, CO *30-2-1*
3. **PAUL SPADAFORA**
   Pittsburgh, PA *31-0 (IBF Champ)*
4. **TAKANORI HATAKEYAMA**
   Japan *24-1-2 (WBA Champ)*
5. **CESAR BAZAN**
   Mexico *38-3-1*
6. **ANGEL MANFREDY**
   Gary, IN *33-5-1*
7. **BEN TACKIE**
   Ghana *21-1*
8. **ARTUR GRIGORIAN**
   Uzbekistan *30-0*
9. **JOHN-JOHN MOLINA**
   Puerto Rico *51-6*
10. **COLIN DUNNE**
    England *32-1*

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

1. **DIEGO CORRALES**
   Sacramento, CA *33-0*
2. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER**
   Grand Rapids, MI *24-0 (WBC Champ)*
3. **JOEL CASAMAYOR**
   Miami, FL *23-0 (WBA Champ)*
4. **ACELINO FREITAS**
   Brazil *27-0*
5. **JONGKWON BAEK**
   South Korea *21-1-1*
6. **LAKVA SIM**
   Mongolia *12-2-1*
7. **JESUS CHAVEZ**
   Mexico *32-1*
8. **YONG SOO CHOI**
   South Korea *27-3-1*
9. **ROBERTO GARCIA**
   Oxnard, CA *33-2*
10. **JOHN BROWN**
    Atlantic City, NJ *22-7-1*

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

1. **MARK JOHNSON**
   Washington, D.C. *38-1*
2. **MASAMORI TOKUYAMA**
   North Korea *22-2-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **LEO GAMEZ**
   Venezuela *33-7-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **FELIX MACHADO**
   Venezuela *19-3-1 (IBF Champ)*
5. **IN JOO CHO**
   South Korea *18-1*
6. **JESUS ROJAS**
   Venezuela *33-8-3*
7. **GERRY PENALOSA**
   Philippines *41-3-2*
8. **HIDEKI TODAKA**
   Japan *17-3-1*
9. **YOKTHAI SITHOAR**
   Thailand *22-1-1*
10. **SAMSON TOYOTA-THAILAND**
    Thailand *38-0*

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

1. **ERIC MOREL**
   Madison, WI *27-0 (WBA Champ)*
2. **IRENE PACHECO**
   Colombia *24-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **MALCOLM TUNACAO**
   Philippines *11-0-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **SORNPICHAI PISNURACHANK**
   Thailand *20-1*
5. **CHATCHAI DUTCHBOY GYM**
   Thailand *37-2*
6. **MEDGOEN TOYOTA-THAILAND**
   Thailand *20-1*
7. **SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT**
   Thailand *38-1*
8. **ALEJANDRO MONTIEL**
   Mexico *43-3*
9. **ISIDRO GARCIA**
   Los Angeles, CA *21-1-1*
10. **DAVID GUERAULT**
    France *17-0*

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

1. **RICARDO LOPEZ**
   Mexico *48-0-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **YOSAM CHOI**
   South Korea *22-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **PICHIT C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand *22-1*
4. **BEBIS MENDOZA**
   Colombia *27-0 (WBA Champ)*
5. **ROSENDO ALVAREZ**
   Nicaragua *26-2-1*
6. **SAMAN SORJATURONG**
   Thailand *42-3-1*
7. **HAWK MAKEPULA**
   South Africa *18-0*
8. **MELCHOR COB-CASTRO**
   Mexico *58-6-4*
9. **WILL GRIGSBY**
   St. Paul, MN *15-2-1*
10. **JORGE ARCE**
    Mexico *25-3-1*

STRAWWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 105 pounds

1. **ZOLANI PETELO**
   South Africa *16-2-2 (IBF Champ)*
2. **JOSE AGUIRRE**
   Mexico *24-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **JOMA GAMBOA**
   Philippines *29-5-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **NOEL ARAMBULET**
   Venezuela *12-2-1*
5. **CHANA PORPAOIN**
   Thailand *41-1-2*
6. **WANDEE SINGWANGCHA**
   Thailand *25-4*
7. **SONGKRAM PORPAOIN**
   Thailand *20-2-1*
8. **KERMIN GUARDIA**
   Columbia *32-2*
9. **JOSE GARCIA**
   Colombia *22-5-1*
10. **DANIEL REYES**
    Colombia *24-0*

NEW FACES

ANTHONY HANSHAW

Super Middleweight

By Joe Santoliquito

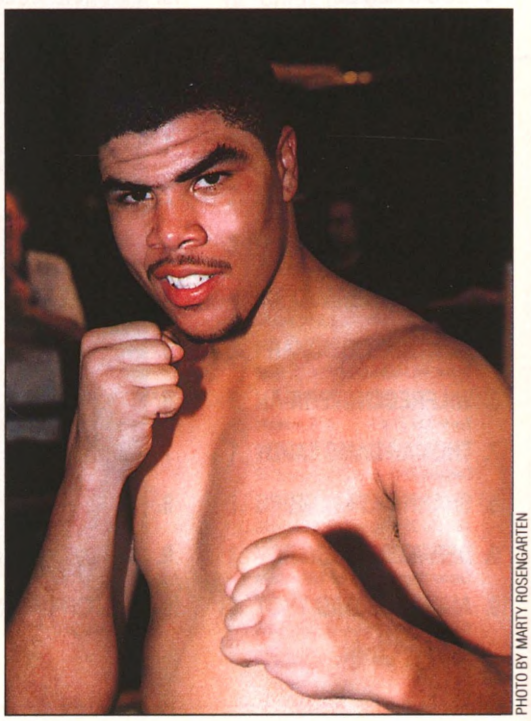


PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Anthony Hanshaw has the feeling that something is not right when he's in the ring. The right hand is working. The left is effective, too. He's evasive and has good head movement. It's when he returns to his corner that he discovers something is missing. The familiar face that nurtured and prodded him throughout his life is gone, as is the promise they made to each other.

We'll do it together ... they always thought.

Hanshaw was preparing for the world amateur championships in Houston, Texas, in 1999, which was to be the first step in a blood oath between father and son. They had envisioned a cheering crowd as the United States flag was being raised and a teary-eyed Hanshaw looking down at the Olympic gold medal around his neck.

The important part for Hanshaw was letting his father, Henry Russell, know that it was all for him—a gift for the time and sacrifice his dad put into making him a success. The tragic part is that Hanshaw never got the chance. On August 5, his father was killed in a landscaping accident two weeks before the world championships.

Hanshaw never made it to Sydney, Australia, either, losing to Jermain Taylor in the Olympic Box-offs. Now he's making a new promise to his father: to win a professional world title. Campaigning as a super middleweight, Hanshaw is off to a good start, winning the first seven fights of his pro career, six via knockout.

Fortunately, the 22-year-old from Mansfield, Ohio, has inherited a number of surrogate fathers since his loss, namely co-trainers Ronnie Shields and Mark Breland, and Main Events Chief Operating Officer Gary Shaw.

Yet ...

"I still feel alone, though I get support from my father's brothers," Hanshaw said. "I have a big family, but it's different when I get into the ring now. When I come back to the corner and don't see my dad, it's like I'm out there by myself. Even so, I have good people working with me now, real good people. My father would be happy."

Hanshaw was literally reared on boxing. Even before he could stand properly on his own, his father would prop his baby boy between his legs and show anyone around how little Tony threw punches. His father would sometimes change his diapers at ringside in the middle of

(Continued on page 95)

PRO RECORD

2000

June 16	Richard Bingham, Las Vegas	KO 1
July 15	Predrag Cretanovic, Secaucus, NJ	KO 1
Aug. 5	Emill Williams, Uncasville, CT	KO 1
Aug. 26	Eric Howard, Las Vegas	KO 2
Sept. 23	Delfino Marion, Warren, OH	KO 1
Oct. 6	Ron Boddie, Atlantic City	W 6
Oct. 20	Demetrius Johnson, Auburn Hills, MI	KO 1

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DRAW	KOs
7	7	0	0	6

International Boxing Hall of Fame - Canastota, New York

ANNUAL INDUCTION WEEKEND JUNE 7-10, 2001

★ A Championship Weekend in Boxing's Hometown ★

BANQUET OF CHAMPIONS

Rivalries . . . Alexis Arguello and Aaron Pryor exchange friendly words about their classic fights.

FIST CASTING

Everlasting . . . A fist cast by Sugar Ray Leonard.

PARADE OF CHAMPIONS

Marvelous . . . Marvin Hagler waves to fans.

Perfect 10. . . Hollywood star Bo Derek greets parade spectators.

CELEBRITY BOXING NIGHT

Fight Night . . . Hector "Macho" Camacho featured in action-packed bouts at Turning Stone Casino Resort.

5K RACE, FUN RUN

Road Work . . . Bernard Hopkins (l) in stride while Livingstone Bramble (r) crosses finish line.

Go . . . Ken Norton officially starts race of celebrity boxers and runners.

INDUCTION CEREMONY

A Moment in Time . . . Joltin' Jeff Chandler (l) gives acceptance speech while Ken Buchanan (r) poses in Museum moments before Induction Ceremony.

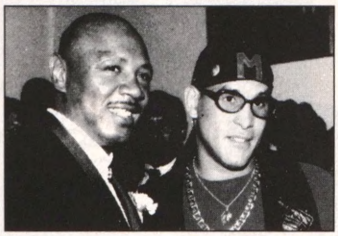
BOXING CARD SHOW

A Collector's Dream . . . Boxing memorabilia for fans. The world's only all-boxing show draws collectors from throughout the world.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Marvelous . . . Marvin Hagler (l) autographs golf bag and Juan LaPorte (r) poses with golfers.

VIP COCKTAIL RECEPTION



Stars . . . Marvelous Marvin Hagler and Hector "Macho" Camacho pose for reception guests, while Carlos Ortiz (r) makes the rounds.

WORKOUT SESSIONS

Bernard Hopkins and Sugar Shane Mosley work out for the public on Museum Grounds.

RINGSIDE TALKS

Reminiscing. . . Bert Sugar interviews Hall of Famer Joey Giradello.

Yes! Please send me a brochure of the Schedule of Events and ticket information

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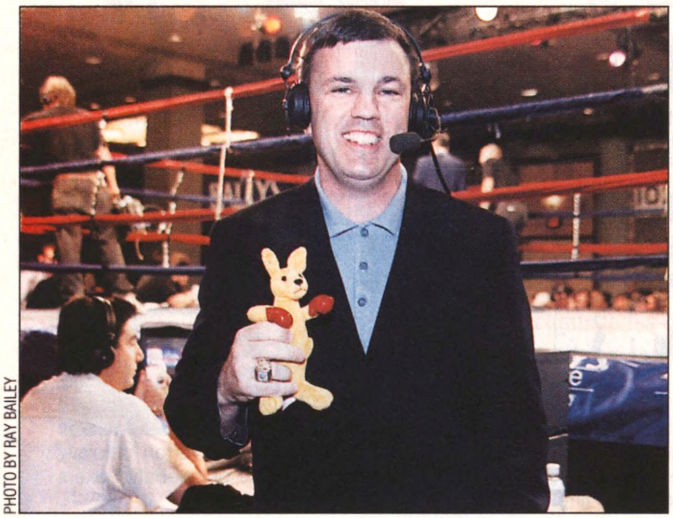


PHOTO BY RAY BAILEY

The U.S. Olympic boxing team may have failed to bring home gold from Australia, but the same cannot be said of color commentator Teddy Atlas, who brought a gold-colored kangaroo back as a gift for Friday Night Fights *colleague Max Kellerman. Maybe the next time Brian Kenny's out of the studio, ESPN2 can use the kangaroo as the replacement host instead of turning to another one of their inept talking heads.*

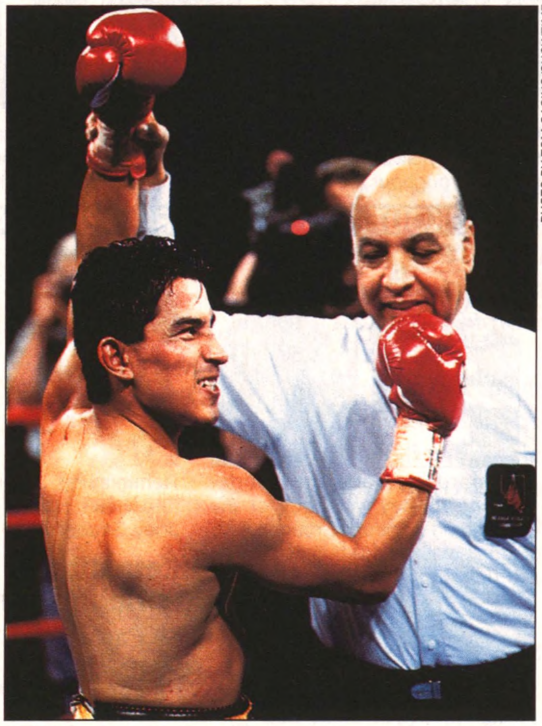


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

If you're going to declare Danny Romero a winner, you'd better raise both of his hands, because if you leave one free, he'll catch you with an uppercut. Ref Joe Cortez learned that lesson the hard way following Romero's recent second-round knockout of Jorge Reyes.

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

In a classy display of sportsmanship, lightweight Alex Trujillo offers congratulations to opponent Jose Luis Juarez on a good fight after their 10-round battle. Of course, it's easy to be a good sport when you know you're about to be awarded the decision, and when you're not the one whose eye looks like a slab of bacon.

PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

HBO KO Nation host Ed Lover tries to get on the ropes and off the hook with Laila Ali at a recent show in Detroit. Ali's response: "Get on the ropes, get off the hook, and get your hand off my shoulder."

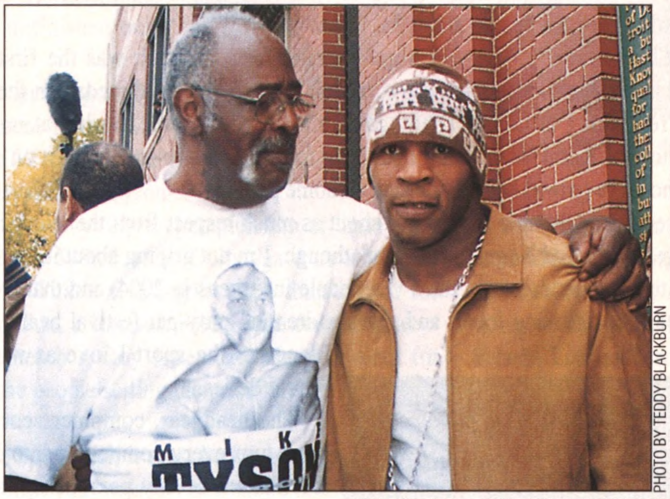
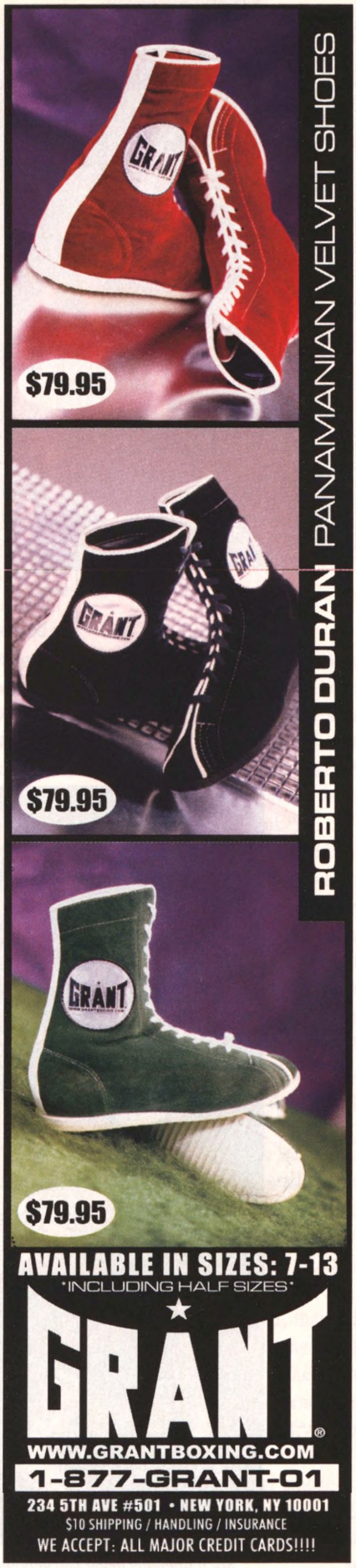


PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

Always a keen student of boxing history, Mike Tyson gets a first-hand history lesson from former heavyweight contender Al "Blue" Lewis, now the head trainer at the Brewster-Wheeler Rec Center in Detroit. Legends such as Joe Louis, Eddie Futch, and Emanuel Steward have all called the Brewster-Wheeler Center home, and Tyson decided to drop by in the days leading up to his fight in the Motor City with Andrew Golota.

NOSTALGIA CORNER

Former heavyweight champion Max Schmeling was painted as the enemy in America when he fought Joe Louis, but in actuality, Schmeling has always been an unbelievably nice guy. After his ring career ended, he spent a lot of his time hanging out on the streets of Germany, smiling wide as he handed out Coca-Colas and friendly handshakes to passers-by.



RYAN OUT LOUD

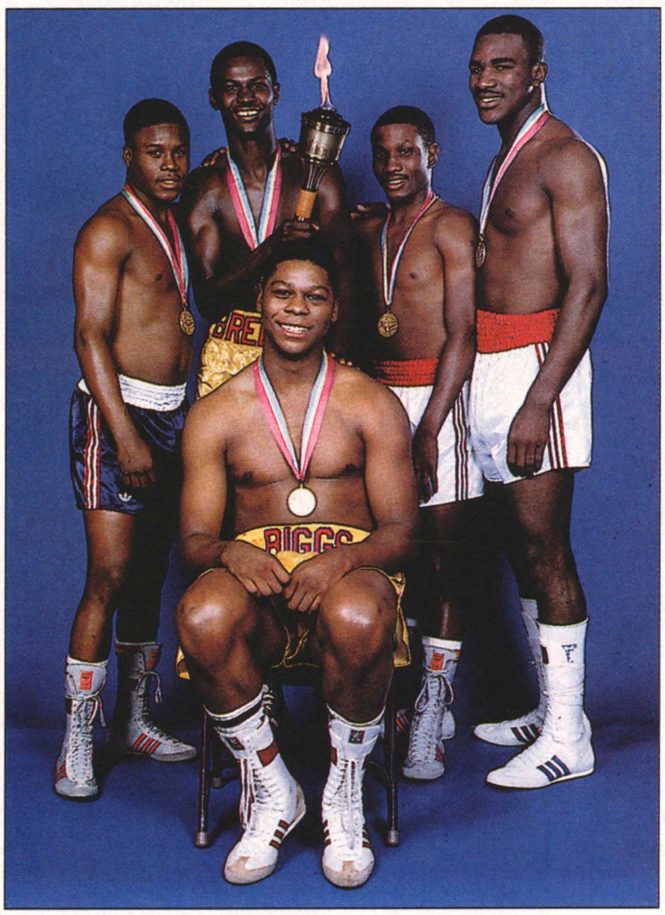
By Jeff Ryan

OPEN THE VENT

Writing can be very therapeutic. In fact, when it comes to getting things off my chest, not even the spotter who lifts the barbell off my crushed lungs during miscalculated bench-press attempts at the gym is as valuable to me as these pages often are. Having said that, here's what needs to be said about …

1) The U.S. failing to win a gold medal in Sydney: It was the first gold-less Games for American fighters since 1948. The sorry total is now two gold medals in the last three Olympiads, if you're scoring at home. Then again, maybe you're just snoring at home. Watching Sergei Kantgetoff of Kazakhstan win a bout by a four-punches-to-two margin on MSNBC at 1 a.m. has been known to *(yawn)* have that effect on some people.

Once again, Olympic boxing got about as much respect from the television poobahs as a vegetarian gets from Ted Nugent. This time, though, I'm not griping about it. In fact, Olympic fisticuffs can be totally bounced from the TV schedule in Athens in 2004, and that would be okay with me. You see, I'm a boxing lover, and that quadrennial pitty-pat festival bears about as much resemblance to the sport I love as whiffle ball does to the World Series.



We'll probably never see another U.S. Olympic team like this again

The headgear, computer scoring, and international rules turn every competitor into Mr. Roboto, drain the tournament of any personality, and turn me off completely. So excited was I to see Cuban heavyweight Felix Savon get cut in his gold medal bout, you'd have thought I was Jed Clampett and Savon's blood was a bubbling crude in my backyard. It's not that I'm some kind of sadist; it's just that for a moment there, the trickle of crimson actually reminded me of real boxing.

And speaking of real boxing, that's just what Americans like Ricardo Williams, Jermain Taylor, and Rocky Juarez are headed to next. So their failure to win gold will cost them some cash when they sit down with HBO. So what? If they're good enough, they'll make the big bucks before long. Look at Olympic disappointment Fernando Vargas, who will end up pocketing more green than '96 gold medalist David Reid before he's done. Ask Mike Tyson if his failure to even make the Olympic team hurt his development or earning power.

Americans have to stop viewing our mediocre Olympic performances as aberrations. The real aberrations were the teams of '76 (five golds) and '84 (nine golds, thanks in part to some gift decisions and a Cuban and Russian boycott). They fooled us into thinking the U.S. is an Olympic boxing powerhouse. Remove '76 and '84 from the equation, though, and in the other nine Olympiads in which it has participated since the '56 Games in Melbourne, the U.S. has never never won

more than three golds. On four occasions, it had only one golden boy, twice it had two, and in 2000 it had none.

In the U.S., where the lure of pro dollars makes it difficult to keep kids in the amateur ranks for the time needed to season them, and a lack of quality trainers means there's no guarantee of success even if they do stay, modest Olympic results are probably all we can expect. If that's not acceptable, then maybe the U.S. can do what it did after the basketball team faltered in '88: panic, turn desperate, ignore tradition, and start sending the pros.

Evander Holyfield and Roy Jones, after all, have some unfinished business to tend to.

2) Pay-per-view price gouging becoming more brazen: Is there *any* bout on TVKO or SET that doesn't cost a fortune these days? Mike Tyson-Andrew Golota, for the heavyweight championship of brain lock, was selling in my area for $49.95. (And Golota gave us at least 79 cents worth of effort.) That's five bucks more than it cost for Lennox Lewis-David Tua, a long-awaited battle for the heavyweight crown! In September, Roy Jones-Eric Harding went for $34.95! Apparently, the people setting the price thought Jones was facing Bob Foster.

PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

What kid today can afford Lewis-Tua?

I can only imagine how tough it must be for adolescent boxing fans (is that an oxymoron?) nowadays when they ask their parents if they can order some of these fights. I remember trying to hit my folks up for $20 for the Ali-George Foreman theater telecast, just a month after spending my own eight bucks for Evel Knievel's closed-circuit plunge into the Snake River Canyon. You'd have thought I'd asked for a new Firebird. How could I be tossing all this money around to watch *televised* sports? Was I nuts? And how could they charge so much for something that wasn't taking place in person? Needless to say, I spent the night of "The Rumble In The Jungle" listening to the round-by-round radio reports provided by Reuters.

If you're a kid these days, and your mother isn't Kathy Duva or Hiawatha Knight, good luck getting her to understand that a Lewis title defense is worth a lot more than the stuff that comes into the house for free on ESPN2's *Friday Night Fights*. Good luck, too, trying to afford these telecasts if all you have is a part-time job after school. A paper route? Hell, if you want to be able to swing Jones-Harding, Tyson-Golota, *and* Lewis-Tua, you better be employed as the managing editor.

While we're on this topic, please spare me the lecture on boxing economics. This is all about greed, pure and simple. The greed of the fighters, the promoters, the cable operators, etc. It used to be that only the superfights cost a fortune; now everything does. And paying for it is making me, and I assume a lot of other people, feel like a first-rate sucker.

Mama said there'd be days like this.

3) The continuing exploitation of Muhammad Ali: Incredibly, some entrepreneurial visionary has now come up with the idea of having Ali and Joe Frazier re-bury the hatchet in a series of banquets that would feature more "I'm Sorrys" than a Brenda Lee concert tour. That's right, mea culpas and mashed potatoes for all. Just one question: How would anyone in the room know what Ali was saying when he stepped up to the mike?

Did you see him on *Today* during the Olympics? Hopefully not. Of all the Ali interviews that have been tough to watch throughout the past few years, the most excruciating one had to be co-host Matt Lauer's sit-down with "The Greatest" and wife Lonnie in Sydney. At times, Ali looked asleep, and he answered questions in a mumbled whisper that couldn't have been picked up if the CIA had planted a state-of-the-art amplification device in his shirt collar. It was so bad that I found myself doing something I would have once thought impossible: having sympathy for Lauer, a guy who makes seven figures a year and has women throwing themselves at him daily.

The next time a television producer wants to do an interview, and Lonnie gives the okay, they should both have their intelligence questioned. To both news outlets and promoters of various events, Ali has become a sideshow attraction. Interviews and public appearances designed to show the world that he's happy and healthy instead leave audiences with exactly the opposite impression.

Those doing the exploiting will tell you, of course, that Ali wants to remain in the public eye. But how much of a say in all this does he really have? I'm reminded of comedienne Joan Rivers' comments a few months back. Rivers had spent some time with the ex-champ and was rattled by the experience. Not trying to be funny, Rivers said that Ali was "out to lunch" and that if someone handed him a crayon he'd probably try to eat it or smoke it. The *Today* interview only served to give those statements more credibility, and you can bet those rubber-chicken reconciliations would, too. ■

DIGGING DEEP

By Ivan Goldman

DON'T CRY FOR ME, SYDNEY

The Olympics boxing competition was a theater of the absurd run by migrant goatherders and chewing gum salesmen who wouldn't know a scoring punch from a pig stew. For the next one in Athens they ought to save everybody a lot of trouble and just pass out the medals without putting fighters through the torture of their misguided scoring system.

In one memorable round I saw at least 20 shots land solid. The official point count afterward? 1-1. At that point, I asked my wife to please fetch me a case of Valium. But she claimed I used it all up in February when Erik Morales was given the decision over Marco Antonio Barrera. So, okay, the amateur officials don't have a monopoly on rotten scoring. But Olympic scoring is in a whole new basement level. It must have been devised by whomever advised Saddam to invade Kuwait.

The Sydney judges, many hailing from the most uncivilized reaches of the planet, probably thought those computer keypads were something they were supposed to take home and use to castrate geese.

For scoring purposes, bodyshots were useless most of the time—but not all the time. Same with punches thrown in a clinch. Worst of all, the judges usually failed to see anything that transpired quickly, especially counterpunches. Slower, dumber shots, though less likely to land, were more apt to receive attention. That was the yin-yang of Olympic scoring.

Television broadcasters Teddy Atlas and Marv Albert correctly tried to focus on what was going on in the ring, not the scoring. If viewers had to hear two hours of complaining every show, it would be like coming home every night to Roseanne.

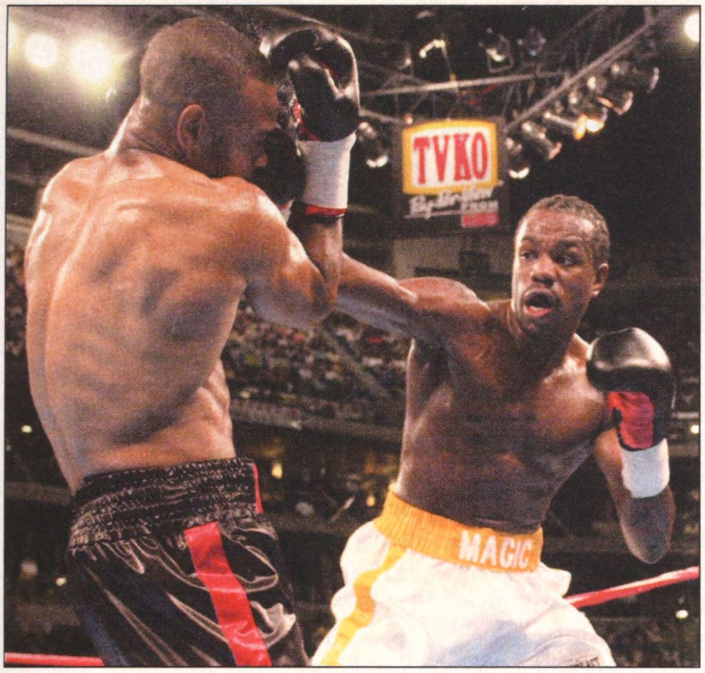
PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Was U.S. Olympian Brian Viloria (left) a victim of shoddy scoring?

Were these judges just inept or crooked? Well, the bozos running things offered to double the amount of any bribe reported by an official. This was a pretty good clue that something smelly had reached their nostrils. Money bubbled to the top like a noxious goo. There was no way to mop it all up.

The boxing charade was only a tiny piece of a huge, ugly production. Corporate fixers, gamblers, pickpockets, hookers, shady doctors, drug peddlers, and various other sleazeballs of ill repute buzzed like flies around Sydney.

When those U.S. relay runners won the gold and made such cavorting, prancing asses of themselves, millions wondered why you can never find a terrorist when you need one.



Jones-Harding: What a ripoff!

The Bulgarian weightlifters were so saturated with steroids and human growth hormone they left trails of chemical slime. Over in the gymnastics section, the usual squads of stunted, altered female athletes competed like terrified minks. And did anybody catch the act of that Russian women's volleyball coach? This guy was worse than Dracula on speedballs. He should have been arrested for impersonating a human.

But I digress. Although boxing got singled out for suspected corruption, it was really no worse than the other events. And, let's face it, for all its faults, it was still way more interesting than synchronized diving.

It's on the record that a city wins the right to an Olympics after meeting the International Olympic Committee's under-the-table price. When there's that much corruption at the top, it won't get any better down on the ground. What was once a fine, pure idea gets trampled long before the cast of kazillions comes out to perform their syrupy opening ceremony.

PAY-PER-WHAT?: The Roy Jones vs. Eric Harding stinker that we're all trying to forget was just another in a long line of pay-per-screwed events. Remember Mike Tyson vs. Peter McNeeley? Oscar De La Hoya vs. Tito Trinidad? And what about the closed-circuit Tyson-Michael Spinks? For one reason or another, they all left viewers cheated.

Making the fans shell out pay-per-view cash does not guarantee better fights. Some of the most magnificent contests of the last decade were not metered events: Buster Douglas vs. Tyson, Julio Cesar Chavez against Meldrick Taylor, Marco Antonio Barrera and Kennedy McKinney, Barrera-Morales, David Tua vs. Ike Ibeabuchi, Johnny Tapia against Paulie Ayala twice.

Only a week after the vastly disappointing Jones-Harding contest on TVKO, non-premium ESPN2 presented a terrific shootout between Stevie Johnston and Jose Luis Castillo in their WBC lightweight title rematch.

Promoters tell you they need pay-per-view to bring money into the sport, but there's a screw loose in this logic. I am unconcerned whether Jones makes $20-million or $100-million in his boxing career. What is it he needs to buy that he can't afford making a few million for each fight on HBO?

When De La Hoya and Trinidad fought boring for millions and millions of dollars, I don't recall them distributing any of the proceeds to all those four-round fighters around the world who routinely take more chances and put on a better show. ■

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

As Tapia and Ayala proved, you don't need PPV to make a great fight

BEING THERE

THE BLUE HORIZON

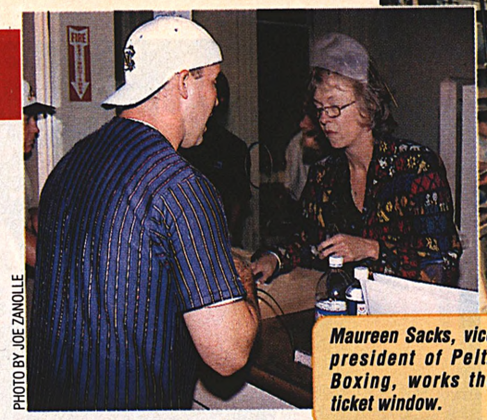


PHOTO BY JOE ZANOLLE

Maureen Sacks, vice president of Peltz Boxing, works the ticket window.

Not a bad seat in the house.

PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

IF YOU GO

Location: 1314 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19121; phone: 215-763-0500

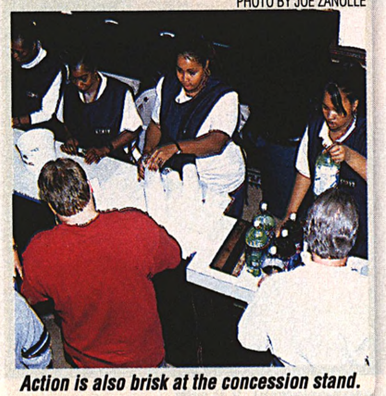
Directions: By car, take the Vine Street exit off the Schuylkill Expressway (Rt. 76), travel north on Broad Street for approximately two miles. The Blue Horizon in on the west side of Broad, one block north of Girard Avenue. Bus: Take C bus north and get off at Broad and Masters Streets; Subway: Take Broad Street Subway to Girard Avenue, walk north one block.

Tickets: Many shows are sold out weeks in advance, so your best bet is to get on the Peltz Boxing mailing list by calling 215-765-0922, then order your tickets as soon as the postcard announcing the next show arrives. Ticket prices: $35, $40. For a listing of shows not promoted by Peltz, call the Horizon direct.

Who to look out for: Many Philadelphia fighters past and present, ranging from David Reid and Bernard Hopkins to Harold Johnson and Kitten Hayward, attend the shows and are generally very approachable. You can also chat with the preliminary fighters, who usually leave the dressing room to watch the rest of the show after they've changed back into their street clothes.

Advice to greenhorns: There's plenty of street parking and a free lot at Progress Plaza, less than two blocks away. It's not the most salubrious neighborhood, but it's fairly well patrolled by the Philadelphia police. A few dollars tip to one of the many street people in the area will help ensure that your car is still there when the fights are over.

PHOTO BY JOE ZANOLLE



Action is also brisk at the concession stand.

By Nigel Collins

There used to be fight venues like the Blue Horizon in virtually every major city, hole-in-the-wall dives that were the proving grounds for fighters ranging from neighborhood heroes to future world champions. But as American culture evolved during the second half of the 20th century, the vast majority of the small clubs that had traditionally served as boxing's farm system began to die, victims of television, casino boxing, and an economic reality that bathed even full houses in red ink.

The Blue Horizon, however, has survived, a relic from a bygone era that clings precariously to life on the edge of the North Philadelphia ghetto. Sadly, today, at the time of its greatest success, this priceless piece of Americana is still struggling for survival. Although SRO crowds at the 1,200-seat auditorium have become commonplace, the building itself is in danger of being shut down due to its decrepit condition, as was reported in the December 2000 issue. There are $1-million in matching state funds available for restoration if either the current owners, Veronica Michaels and Carol Ray, or the city can come up with an equal amount. Local boxing commissioner George Bochetto is "very optimistic" that something will be done, but, as of press time, the future of the Blue still hangs in the balance.

The Horizon was built in 1865 as a fashionable private residence, and in the early-1900s was modified into a fraternal lodge for the Loyal Order of the Moose. It was purchased by boxing promoter Jimmy Toppi in 1960 and originally called Toppi Arena. A year later, Toppi changed the name to the Blue Horizon after the '40s song "Beyond The Blue Horizon." The building hosted its first fight card on November 3, 1961, headlined by George Benton's third-round kayo of Chico Corsey.

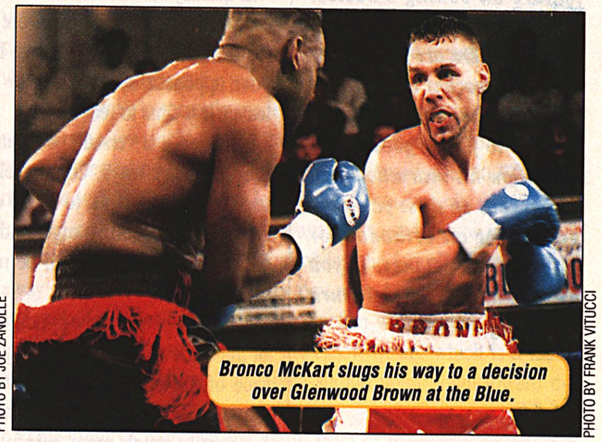
Marty Kramer, working with a $250-per-show grant from Madison Square Garden, promoted there in the early-'60s, as did future Hall of Famer Herman Taylor. But the individual responsible for helping the Blue persevere and eventually prosper is J Russell Peltz, who staged his first promotion there on September 30, 1969, drawing an overflow crowd of 1,606 to see Bennie Briscoe blast out Tito Marshall in the first round. Boxing, to varying degrees of success, has been a constant there ever since, but didn't become a consistent money-maker until the USA Network began broadcasting *Tuesday Night Fights* from the Blue in 1986.

PHOTO BY JOE ZANOLLE

Happy Horizon fans display some of the souvenir merchandise, such as T-shirts and programs, available on fight night.

The view from outside of the Blue.

PHOTO BY JOE ZANOLLE



Bronco McKart slugs his way to a decision over Glenwood Brown at the Blue.

PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

A fusion of factors have combined to make the Blue Horizon "the best venue in the world at which to watch a fight," according to a readers' poll in the June '99 issue of THE RING. First are the fabulous sight lines. With the farthest reaches of the balcony only 71 feet from the ring, there's not a bad seat in the house. Then there's the gritty ambiance, which is straight out of a 1950s B movie, complete with a rowdy crowd, clouds of cigar smoke, and blood stains on the canvas. But rather than reading about it, plan a trip to the Blue now—before it's too late. ■

BLUE CHAMPS

There has been only one world title fight held at the Blue Horizon (Charles Brewer's 12-round decision over Joey DeGrandis in defense of the IBF super middle title, December 2, 1997), but 30 future or former champions have fought there. They are:

Harold Johnson	Livingstone Bramble	Arturo Gatti
Curtis Cokes	Robert Hines	Wayne McCullough
Jeff Chandler	Julio Borboa	Meldrick Taylor
Matthew Saad Muhammad	Frankie Randall	Tim Witherspoon
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THE A, B, C & DEAS OF BOXING

THE LEFT JAB

By Tommy Deas

You've watched the world's best fighters and read about them in this magazine, and now you want to give boxing a try, or at least learn a little more about the mechanics of the sport. Welcome to THE RING'S bi-monthly instructional feature on boxing's basics. Bear in mind, the techniques described here are just one of many approaches to the Sweet Science. The most important thing is to find a good coach and follow his instructions. All instructions on these pages are geared for an orthodox, or right-handed, stance. If you are left-handed, merely turn everything around.

The most basic punch in the sport of boxing is the left jab, and in many ways it may be the most important.

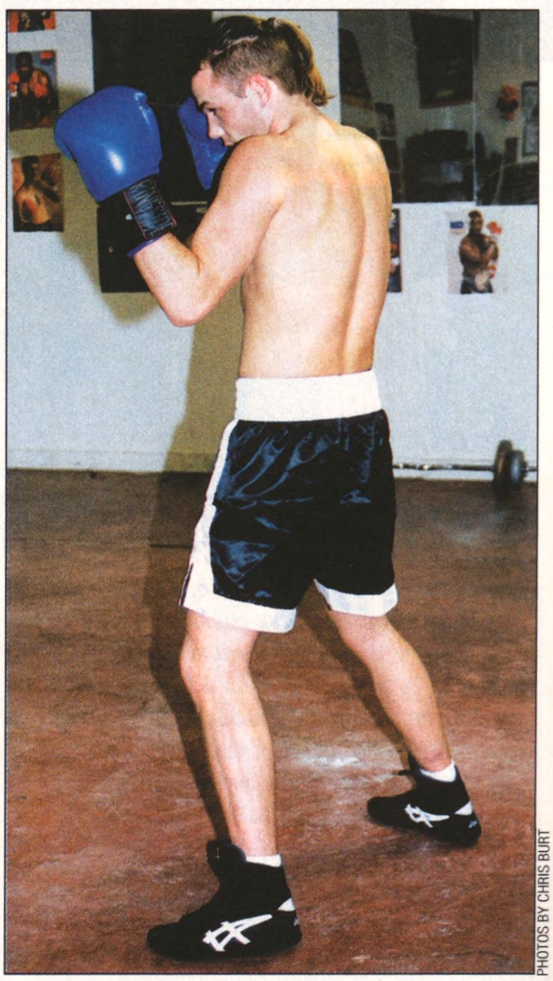
Before you get overeager to begin working on the more powerful knockout punches that can send your opponent crashing to the canvas, it would be wise to first master the jab. Without the lead left, you will find it difficult to land the glamour punches that will come later in your fistic education.

What makes the jab such an effective weapon is a matter of basic physics. Everyone knows that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. If you study your stance, you will quickly see that the left hand is the closest to the target standing in front of you. The jab is a straight punch with the hand nearest your opponent, so it gets there quickly and leaves less time to react to it.

The jab is a versatile weapon that can be used in many ways. Offensively, it can be used to pile up points, to set up other punches, or as a constant range-finder to gauge whether the opponent can be reached with other blows.

The jab is the only punch that, because of the angles involved, lands squarely on the face of the opponent. A punch to the jaw may induce a knockout, but a jab to the nose is actually much more painful, something you will come to appreciate the first time someone plants a stinging jab between your nostrils. This causes the eyes to water, which makes followup punches easier to land, and may give your foe pause to consider if he wants to wander into range again.

Defensively, the jab can obscure an opponent's vision, keep him at a safe distance, and keep him occupied so he cannot concentrate on his own offense. It can also annoy the opponent if it lands with consistency, causing the kind of frustration that may get him out of his game plan or cause him to make a mistake that will leave him open for more punishment.



PHOTOS BY CHRIS BURT

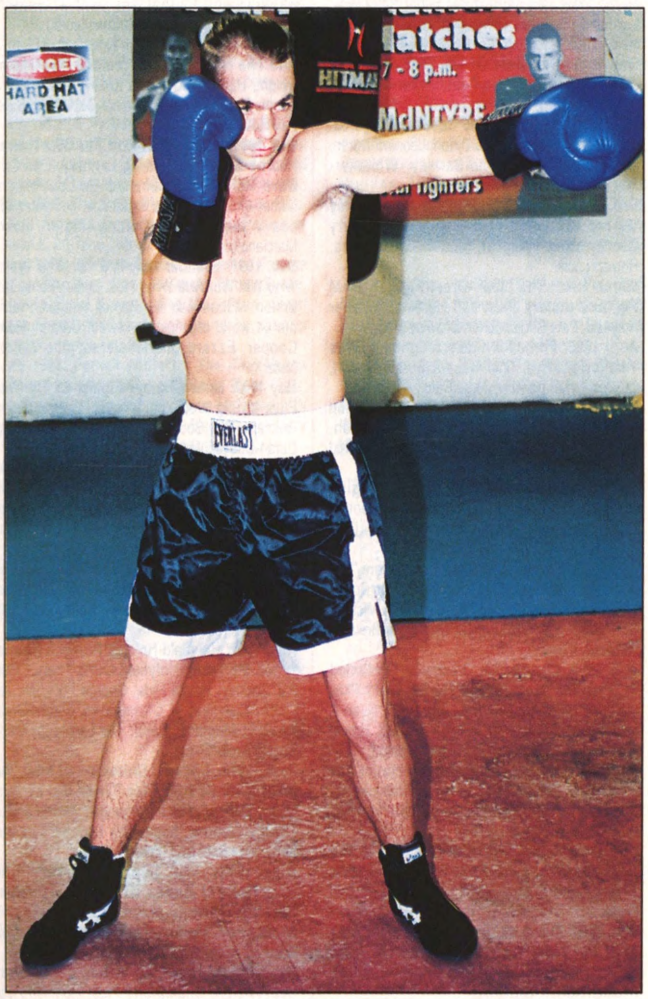
Junior middleweight Brad Thompson demonstrates the correct stance and hand position for throwing the left jab. Note that his left thumb is pointed toward the ceiling.

Anyone who has spent any time in the boxing ring can tell you it's difficult to mount an attack when you're constantly trying to block or dodge a good, stiff jab. For this reason, many coaches will advise novice boxers: "When in doubt, jab." You will learn over time how to make the most effective use of the jab, but at first it is a useful tool that you can always turn to when no other options present themselves.

The mechanics of the jab are simple, but must be practiced with diligence over a long period of time to reach perfection. Start out working in front of a mirror in slow motion, concentrating on all aspects of the technique, until you are comfortable with it. Only after you are confident that you have developed a good feel for the jab should you begin to work at full speed. Even then, take a round or two every few days to slow down and look at your jab to make sure you aren't getting sloppy.

Start with your left hand in front of your face roughly level with your eyebrow. Extend the left hand toward the target with a relaxed arm and relaxed fist, squeezing tight just as it closes in on the final few inches before impact.

As the punch is launched, the left thumb should be pointed toward the ceiling, and it should remain in this position until the arm is about three-quarters extended. In the final approach to the target, snap your thumb downward violently as you squeeze the fist tighter. Upon impact, the fist should be perfectly parallel to the ground, so that you could set a cup of tea on top of the backside of the hand.



At the last moment before the jab lands, the thump is snapped downward, which gives the punch added power. Note that Thompson's right hand is held high, protecting his face from counterpunches.

The snap at the end of the punch is the most crucial aspect to an effective jab. It is this corkscrew action that causes the opponent's head to snap back or causes the damage to the face that you wish to inflict. It operates on the same principal as a rifle barrel, which causes the bullet to twist and gain velocity as it travels.

A good jab involves more than just pumping the left arm. The left shoulder and hip should rotate slightly in motion with the punch. The simplest way to illustrate proper rotation is by paying attention to your bellybutton. When you launch the punch, your bellybutton should be pointing at about a 45-degree angle toward the opponent. As you rotate your hip and shoulder, the bellybutton will turn so that it is at roughly a 90-degree angle to the opponent when the punch lands. This gets more weight behind the jab and causes it to land with more impact.

You can add more power to the jab by taking a short, sharp step forward with your left foot as you throw the punch. This is mostly useful when jabbing while moving ahead aggressively, but can be done while maintaining a safe distance from the opponent if you then step back as you draw your left hand back to its original position. When moving side-to-side, time the punch with your step in either direction, so that it lands just as your foot hits the canvas.

Getting the jab out there is only half the job, which you will discover when someone tries to counter your lead left. It must be returned to where it came from with equal care if you wish to avoid right-hand counters. Snatch your left hand back into place along the same path it followed when you were throwing it, and with equal speed and urgency. Act like you're snatching a $100 bill from someone, and you don't want him to be able to grab it back. Make sure you don't drop your hand toward the canvas on its return, leaving an opening for the opponent to throw over after you punch. The return should be as straight as the punch itself.

One mistake commonly made by many beginners is dropping the right hand a few inches while throwing the jab, as if the two hands were connected by a string. If you leave yourself open in this manner, you will be a target for a left hook or a counter jab, so take care to make sure your other hand is always in place while you jab.

Another common mistake is allowing the left elbow to pop out away from the body, which takes power and snap from the punch and makes it easier to counter. This chicken-wing motion leaves you merely pumping your arm from the elbow down, which is a much less formidable weapon. The elbow should point down toward the canvas at all times when you jab.

Once you've practiced the jab in front of the mirror so that you have a good idea of how to throw it, step over to a heavybag and begin to work on your timing and distance.

The jab should land at full extension of the arm. If you find that you are actually pushing the bag away from you at the end of the punch, step back a few inches so that the bag pops back on impact, and not from a push. If you are barely tapping the surface of the bag, step in a few inches. You don't want to tap your opponent on the nose, you want to flatten it. The fist should sink into the bag a bit, and you should try to land all four knuckles squarely on the target for maximum effect.

The better your jab, the better a fighter you will become. Keep working to improve it, and the rest of your game will be better for it.

Next issue: the right cross. ■

Tommy Deas is a sports writer for The Tuscaloosa [Alabama] News and a trainer of professional and amateur boxers.

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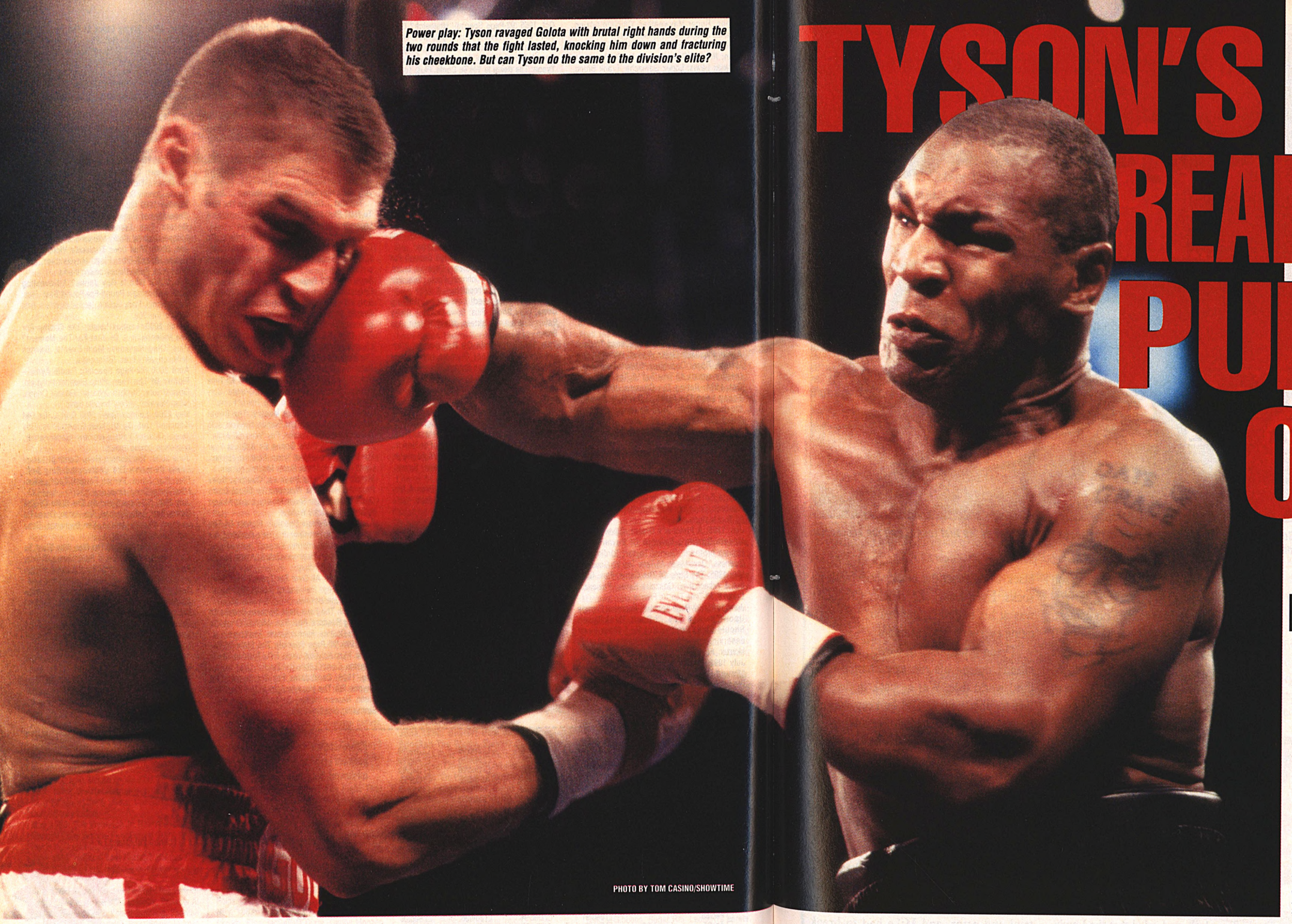


Power play: Tyson ravaged Golota with brutal right hands during the two rounds that the fight lasted, knocking him down and fracturing his cheekbone. But can Tyson do the same to the division's elite?

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

TYSON'S NOT READY TO PUNCH OUT!

Forget Retirement ... A Title Shot Awaits!

By Joe Santoliquito

We can't get rid of him. Mike Tyson haunts us like an obese uncle with bad breath and even worse BO, hovering around the kitchen looking for seconds. You would think that boxing's number-one bad boy would have already squandered his seconds, thirds, and fourths during his tempestuous career. But after dispatching Andrew Golota at The Palace of Auburn Hills, Tyson may have finally *earned* another helping of boxing's biggest pie. For all of his miscreant behavior in and out of the ring, for all of his mindless dribble about "putting a bullet" in various peoples' heads, Tyson, three tumultuous years removed from the infamous "Bite Fight," has gradually legitimized himself as a viable contender.

We tried to shun him after he chewed off a piece of Evander Holyfield's ear, but Tyson returned, tried to break Frans Botha's arm, then knocked him out with one punch. Next came the road rage incident that put Tyson behind bars again, and you figured he was gone for good. But no, before you knew it, he was back again, hitting Orlin Norris after the bell, a no-no that prompted the Nevada boxing commission to strongly suggest that he take his act elsewhere. So Tyson jetted to Manchester, where he treated the English to a sample of his special brand of mayhem, blowing out hapless Julius Francis in less than two rounds. They liked him so much on the other side of the Atlantic, they invited Tyson back again. But when he flattened Lou Savarese *and* a referee in just 38 seconds, then claimed he wanted to eat Lennox Lewis' children for dessert, it didn't go over too well with the prissy Brits, who prefer that both their referees and their children go unmolested.

Still, concessions are always made for superstars. When Vince Carter drives the lane and seemingly glides 20 feet in the air toward the basket, you can forget a travelling call. And you can expect a borderline pitch to Derek Jeter to usually go in favor of the all-star Yankee shortstop. Look at

PHOTO BY AL BELLO /ALLSPORT

Tyson strolls to a neutral corner after flooring Golota with a sizzling overhand right to the cheek near the end of the first round. Had the knockdown come earlier in the round, it's doubtful Golota would have made it to the second.

the two of them, and you can forgive the oversights. They deserve it for all they've done for their sports, right? Now look at Tyson, a convicted rapist who litters every public statement with the "F" word. It's not quite the same picture, but just as the athletes who attract the largest number of paying customers are given the benefit of the doubt in basketball and baseball, Tyson will continue to be forgiven as long as he sells tickets.

The fact that Tyson is on the verge of another crack at the title says a lot about the dearth of bankable talent in the heavyweight division. Much to its chagrin, boxing has discovered that it still needs this particular fat, smelly, greedy uncle. But that Tyson is currently in the position he's in also says something about the 34-year-old fighter's perseverance and hard-boiled resolve. After all, he has put together a 4-0 (4) with 1 no-contest record since the second Holyfield fight, albeit against flawed opposition. But above and beyond Tyson's personal goals and accomplishments is boxing's need for closure. Before it can move on to other things, the sport needs to answer one persistent question: Can Tyson regain the heavyweight title?

If Tyson, 49-3 (43) with 1 no-contest, wins the heavyweight crown again, he'll join Muhammad Ali and Holyfield as a three-time heavyweight champ and force boxing back onto the front pages of every daily sports section in America. If he loses, Tyson will finally go away, banished to the realm of glorified opponent status, a faded tough guy for up-and-comers to test their mettle against. Either way, the issue will be settled once and for all. Things certainly seem to be coming to a head. A week after Tyson's third-round TKO of Golota, WBC President Jose Sulaiman said the WBC unanimously approved that Tyson would be elevated to the number-one ranking following the November 11 Lennox Lewis-David Tua clash, and ruled that the Lewis-Tua winner must defend against Tyson.

This could be entertaining, because the Tyson who showed up against Golota revealed teasing traces of the fiery Iron Mike of old. The resentful glare was still the same, as were the accessories: the white, terry-cloth towel, the signature black trunks, and the black shoes with no socks. Even camp cheerleader Crocodile was at his hollering, obnoxious best, irritating everyone within earshot.

Tyson's purpose, however, had been cloudy during his run at a chance for a third world title. Was he back in the ring just for the money? Did he keep coming back simply because boxing is all he knows? The most compelling questions focused on his motivation. But according to the handlers and sparring partners who helped prepare Tyson for his biggest fight since meeting Holyfield on June 28, 1997, he was more motivated for the Golota fight than for any fight in years.

"This is the best Mike has looked since I've been training him," head trainer Tommy Brooks said. "Boxing is a lot of trial-and-error, and Mike had to break some of the rust he had built up over the years. Boxing is about repetition, and Mike was repeatedly going over what we wanted to accomplish. He looked real good, I thought. He was moving his head, he was attacking. He looked like the old Tyson. This is the most motivated I've seen him."

Corey Sanders, a heavyweight who had fought Golota and had sparred with Botha and Michael Grant in the past, was one of three sparring partners Tyson used to train for Golota. What Sanders saw was a very eager Tyson.

"Mike was one of the calmest, coolest guys I've ever worked with sparring, but once he got in that ring, he turned vicious," Sanders said. "He was out to take care of business, and I think he was a little better than he was before. There was talk he was going to retire, but a guy that's through with boxing doesn't work as hard as he did. He really worked hard for this. His movement was real good during sparring, and when he didn't want to get hit, he didn't. He's the hardest puncher I've ever sparred with."

The 222-pound Tyson put the rigorous training to good use against Golota. He

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Returning to form: Tyson is still no defensive genius, but he showed more upper body movement than in recent fights, which caused this Golota right to miss his head and land on the shoulder.

WHO'S RUNNING THE SHOW?

Tyson's mouth and Golota's lack of fighting spirit weren't the only controversies to rear their ugly heads at the Palace of Auburn Hills. Controversy also enveloped Michigan's boxing governance. The Department of Consumers and Industry Services regulates professional boxing in the state. The Athletic Board of Control, consisting of nine gubernatorial appointees, is merely an advisory body with little real power, save for suspensions and the limited ability to impose fines.

When Tyson-Golota came to town, figureheads within CIS who never haunt prize fights started slinging around powershots unlike any Tyson or Golota winged. Those within the department with hands-on knowledge of the sport were gagged. Kathleen Wilbur, head of CIS, conducted her first, and perhaps last, boxing-related press conference, to announce that no matter what kind of anti-depressant Tyson takes, it wouldn't block his licensure. All state employees on fight night were instructed to refer media to Andrew Metcalf, the head of the CIS licensing division that directly oversees boxing.

Metcalf never showed up.

There was a sustained debate before Laila Ali's fight about whether the contest should consist of three-minute or two-minute rounds. Athletic Board of Control officials knew two-minute rounds are the industry standard for women. But a couple of years ago, when the board advised CIS to change state law to allow two-minute rounds for women, a CIS boss deemed the action discriminatory. Ultimately, since CIS was absent anyway, board Chairman David Sebastian and Vice Chairman Dr. Michael Sherbin ruled in favor of two-minute rounds, although not empowered to do so.

Sebastian spat that, "The public was cheated," after Tyson-Golota, although he tempered those comments after learning of Golota's reported injuries.

"If Andrew Golota was medically justified in quitting the fight, whether it was from a concussion, a fractured cheekbone, or potential blood on the brain, then my opinion changes," Sebastian said. "If that's the case, should we force him to come out for an extra round, and possibly die, like the poor kid in Boston [Bobby Tomasello] did the same night?

"My position on the fight has gone from disgust to questionable understanding—with a touch of cynicism."

Gary Shaw, Golota's promoter, sparked a prefight controversy when he balked at using Everlast gloves. Until about two hours before the fight, Shaw threatened not to allow Golota to enter the ring unless he was allowed to use Reyes. Tyson's contract called for Everlast. That debate took much longer than the fight.

The week before the fight, Sebastian, an attorney and high-powered Republican Party figure, had a state legislator pal introduce a bill that would create a free-standing state boxing commission. Sebastian wrote the bill, and said he modeled it largely on the structure of the Nevada Athletic Commission. Remember that bill in your prayers.

—David Mayo

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Ali and Lenhart ended up boxing two-minute rounds

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Trainer Al Certo tried to persuade Golota to keep fighting at the start of the third round, but "The Foul Pole" spit out his mouthpiece and told Certo and the ref that he was quitting.

made himself a smaller target, bobbing and weaving to get inside the 6'4", 240-pounder's reach. The power began to show midway into the opening round, when Tyson stunned Golota with an overhand right, then later dropped the Chicago-based heavyweight in the closing seconds with another picturesque right to the jaw. Golota quickly beat the count just before the bell rang, but he wanted to quit between rounds. It was Al Certo, Golota's trainer, who convinced Golota to go back out for the second.

Tyson fired out of his corner, blazing rights and lefts into Golota's body, then came up top to strafe his face. Within the opening seconds of the second round, Tyson had opened a cut just below his opponent's left eye. Golota would later say the cut was the result of a headbutt, but anyone at ringside or watching on pay-per-view clearly saw Tyson peg the hapless Golota with several brutal rights to the injured area.

The punishment had a telling effect on Golota's psyche as well as his face. After surviving the second round, he flat-out refused to go on. Certo tried vainly to convince him to keep fighting, and even attempted to shove his mouthpiece back into place, but Golota would have none of it. He spit out his mouthpiece, broke away from Certo, and wandered out of his corner, into the center of the ring. Referee Frank Garza, who did an admirable job dealing with the two volatile personalities he shared the ring with, tried to escort the big Pole back to his corner. Garza placed his arm around Golota's shoulder to steer him in the right direction, but was rebuffed when Golota shoved him aside, and uttered the famous words, "I quit," which will stick to him the way "No mas" stuck to Roberto Duran—for the rest of his life.

"Golota never mentioned anything to me about headbutts," Garza said immediately after the fight. "I warned both fighters a couple of times about using their heads, but no, that cut on Golota wasn't caused by a headbutt. I want to make this clear: I didn't disqualify Golota. I ruled the result a TKO [at the start of] the third round. I really didn't know what Golota was doing when he left his corner. I told him to get back, and he told me he quit. He kept walking around, so I thought I'd guide him back to his corner, giving him a second chance, and he told me he quit again."

Chaos broke loose when the 16,224 in attendance realized what had happened. A hail of debris rained down, including cups of soda and ice balls that doused Golota as security guards rushed him back to his dressing room.

"Tyson had more balls than my fighter did," said an angry Certo, who would later recant his postfight comments when he found out, a few days after the fight, that Golota, 36-5 (29), had suffered a concussion, a fractured cheekbone, and a herniated disk in his neck. "Let me tell you something, if Tyson knew how to fight, he'd be dangerous. He'd have killed somebody by now. Tyson doesn't know how to fight, he just knows how to punch. He didn't show me anything. Andrew was hitting him with half-ass punches, and I thought he won the second round. I was never impressed by Tyson. Listen, the guy has a filthy mouth, but I'm no [bleeping] angel, either. You're heavyweight champion of the world, you don't talk the way he does. He's blown it. He was very beatable, my fighter just had no balls."

And there was Tyson, embroiled in the center of a controversy again, but for once, he was not the one who ignited it. If it's possible, Golota's capitulation actually made Tyson look somewhat tranquil. Aside from wanting to take Golota's head off for stealing his chance to do so in the ring, Tyson was on his best behavior. He maintained that his tirades and insults during several prefight press conferences were just ploys to sell tickets and ruffle Golota's composure.

Yet prior to the fight, Tyson claimed the Golota bout might be his last and that he was weary of contending with the constant haranguing from the media he has endured through the years. Tyson was so disillusioned after the fight, he blew off the postfight press conference and left Brooks and adviser Shelly Finkel standing in front of his closed locker room, trying to explain what he was thinking, which would be a tough task for a trained psychiatrist.

"I really don't know what Mike is going to do," Brooks said. "The decision is his own. I think Mike can be the undisputed heavyweight champ again; that's why I signed along. But I can't really say what Mike is thinking or what his next move may be."

Most media members scoffed at the notion that the Golota bout was Tyson's last. After all, he currently has about 20- to 25-million very good reasons to climb back into the ring.

Golota, on the other hand, has run out of attractive options. The Tyson travesty had to be his last significant payday. In fact, he still might not receive the full $2.5-million he'd signed for. Showtime/SET boxing boss Jay Larkin was livid at Golota's surrender and threatened to withhold his pay. Seconds after Golota refused to go on TV to comment on his downfall, a fuming Larkin rolled his much smaller frame right up into Golota's confused face and told the heavyweight exactly what he thought. Seconds later, a visibly shaken Golota was stuttering and grasping for words as he struggled to describe his actions in front of SET's cameras. Even so, as of press time, the network was reportedly holding back $500,000 of his purse. A source at Main Events, Golota's promoter, said the enigmatic Pole was probably through fighting, and if he did come back, it wouldn't be under the Main Events banner.

"We were embarrassed by this," Larkin admitted. "We rolled the dice and we crapped out. We could have hit something big. Going into it, the general consensus was that this could have been a great fight. The good news is that Tyson came out of this enhanced. Tyson came out of this better than he went into it."

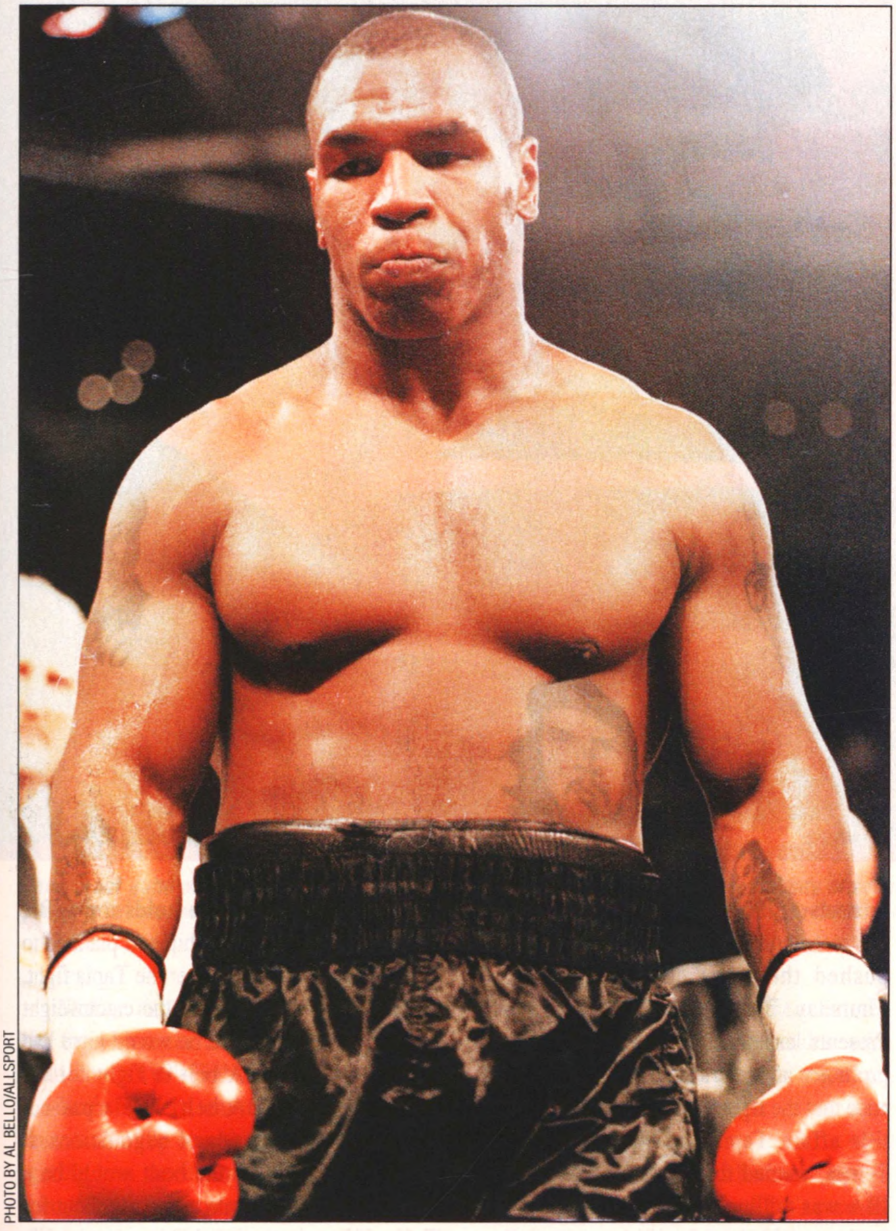


PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Tyson seems to be pondering his future as he waits for the start of the Golota fight. Next up could be the Lewis-Tua winner or a third fight with Evander Holyfield. Either way, there's tons of money to be made.

Tyson said he needed a few weeks to clear his head and think about what he wants to do. And while his boxing future seems the surest part of his life, the PPV numbers for the Golota fight were a disappointing 450,000 buys, figures that made Larkin cringe. But Larkin is not discouraged; he knows the money that lies ahead with Tyson. He said that the disappointing pay-per-view figures have to be taken into context. Larkin's spin was that the numbers were disappointing by Tyson standards, and that the public was not intrigued by the matchup and would rather see Tyson fight against a higher level of opposition. Big Tyson events of the future will need to be limited now to either a third fight with Holyfield or a fight with the winner of Lewis-Tua.

"Let me give the public credit for that; the public is becoming more sophisticated," Larkin said. "I thought Mike looked terrific; he had a lot of head movement back, he was very aggressive, very defensive, and as far as we're concerned, he behaved as a consummate professional. I'd say he is getting most of his game back, he's about 80 to 90 percent there. He is certainly one of the two or three most dangerous heavyweights in the world right now.

"From a vision of sheer competitiveness, he has no reason to retire. Tyson would not speak to us afterwards, but you would think there is no bigger payday out there right now for Lewis and Tyson than for them to fight each other. It's the fight the public demands, and we've heard Shelly Finkel and Main Events' Gary Shaw, speaking for Lewis, say that they both want that fight. Everything depends on Lewis, because Tyson wants that fight."

If Tyson and Lewis do fight, and right now it's looking very much like they will, providing Lewis gets past Tua, the bout could conceivably break the all-time PPV record of approximately two million buys set by Holyfield-Tyson II. But money alone is seldom the best reason for doing anything. As far as boxing is concerned, the best part will be that we'll finally be able to answer the only lingering question about Tyson that remains unanswered. And who knows? We just might end up being glad he stuck around after all. ■

AYALA-TAPIA II

Controversy Everywhere ... Except Between The Ropes

PHOTOS BY CHRIS FARINA

Though not quite as thrilling as their first fight, Ayala and Tapia again produced plenty of action in the rematch. Tapia's slick moves and sharp punching (above) put him in front early, but Ayala stepped up his offense (opposite left) in the later rounds to pull out the controversial win.

By Kevin Iole

It seemed so simple. You have a fantastic fight between two top-notch fighters, you make a rematch. Both fighters want to do it again, so how complicated can it be? Well ...

The press conference to announce the rematch between Paulie Ayala and Johnny Tapia was scheduled for a Tuesday. But only hours after it had been called, it had to be postponed when Tapia hired America Presents as his new promoter. That forced the restructuring of several contracts and pushed the news conference back to Thursday. But Dan Goossen of America Presents lasted only a few days as Tapia's promoter after he said at the news conference that the fight would be a 10-round non-title affair. Tapia and his wife/manager, Teresa, wanted to fight for a title, and the IBA was willing to sanction the bout as a featherweight championship.

There was only one problem: Ayala wanted no part of it. He holds the WBA bantamweight championship and planned to return to bantamweight after the Tapia fight, which was to be fought at the catchweight of 124 pounds. Because he would have had to give up the WBA belt to fight for the lesser-regarded IBA belt, Ayala passed. After a complex series of negotiations, it was determined that the bout would be a non-title fight for Ayala and a title bout for Tapia. If he won, he would be recognized as the IBA featherweight champion.

Strange as that scenario was, it was par for the course for the rematch of what was THE RING's 1999 Fight of the Year.

Both fighters wanted to enter the ring last. A coin flip was held, which Ayala won, giving him the champion's right to enter last. That, however, didn't satisfy the Tapias, who claimed that trainer Jesse Reid was not authorized to represent them at the coin flip. As a result, the fighters entered simultaneously from different aisles, with their ring-walk music playing together, making it all but indecipherable.

Bizarre.

"Just when I thought I had seen everything, this happens," said the fight's promoter, Bob Arum, shaking his head.

But as bizarre as the prefight antics were, they were nothing compared to what happened after Ayala edged Tapia once again over 12 good, but hardly great, rounds. Judges Chuck Giampa and Jerry Roth scored it 115-113, while judge Keith MacDonald saw it 116-112, all for Ayala.

Tapia boxed more the second time around, electing not to swap punches with Ayala as much as he did in the stirring first

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Tapia, an 8-5 favorite, sneaks in a left over Ayala's guard. But his punches never seemed to hurt Ayala, casting doubt on trainer Jesse Reid's claim that Tapia hits much harder as a featherweight than he did as a bantam.

fight. He also moved much more, particularly in the first half of the fight, and often made Ayala miss. Reid said after the fight that Ayala was missing his punches "by three or four feet."

But Ayala, 31-1 (12), managed to land enough shots, particularly in the second half of the fight, to sway the judges and earn the decision. That enraged the Tapia camp, which not only believed it had won, but believed it had won by a wide margin.

"This is what is so sick about boxing," Reid said. "How they can take that fight from Johnny after he boxed so beautifully, I'll never know. I don't know anyone who is neutral in this thing and whose boxing knowledge I respect who thinks Ayala won this fight. That just didn't happen. It was Johnny's fight, and they took it from him."

Tapia needed a knockout to win entering the final round, as it turned out, since he trailed 106-103 on all three scorecards. But Tapia, thinking he was easily ahead, was content to stick his jab and throw a few shots to the body. He hardly showed the desperation of a man who felt he needed a knockout. The only sustained flurry of the final round came in the last 20 seconds as each man tried to finish strong.

When the decision was announced, Tapia was stunned. After the fight, Tapia had to be dragged from the ring by three security guards.

"I know I won," said Tapia, an 8-5 favorite coming into the bout. "He didn't

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Ayala wasn't quite as brilliant as when he upset Tapia in '99, but considering all the concessions he made—fighting at Tapia's weight, accepting the smaller purse, agreeing to enter the ring simultaneously—the Texas southpaw still gave a commendable performance.

beat me. I boxed his ass off. I boxed the s_ _ _ out of him. It wasn't close."

And the Tapia camp had company. While most of the ringside media either had Ayala winning or had it a draw, the Showtime announcing crew of Steve Albert and Bobby Czyz thought Tapia won in a walk, as did the Showtime viewers, who favored Tapia nine rounds to three. THE RING also favored Tapia, 115-113.

When the decision was announced, Tapia, 48-2-2 (25), shoved Top Rank Vice President Todd DuBoef, who stumbled backward. As DuBoef was stumbling, Tapia's brother-in-law, Robert Gutierrez, slugged him on the cheek.

For that, which was as good a shot as any that landed with the gloves on, Gutierrez was handcuffed and escorted from the arena. Gutierrez was not charged, however, when DuBoef declined to press charges. It was the second time in as many Ayala-Tapia fights that Gutierrez was handcuffed. He was arrested by Las Vegas Metropolitan Police shortly before the first fight for causing a disturbance.

Even that scene paled in comparison to what occurred in Tapia's dressing room after the bout. Tapia's close friend, Bob Case, was irate over the call and was loudly making his feelings known in the dressing room. Those feelings were complicated, though, by the fact that Case was a vice president of the IBA. Case said he wasn't representing the IBA in the fight because of his ties with Tapia.

But it looked suspicious when IBA President Dean Chance, the former Cy Young award winner, walked in a few minutes later and handed his belt to Tapia. Case later resigned his position with the IBA because of what he said were disparaging comments made to the media about him by Chance as Chance was attempting to explain his decision to award the belt to Tapia despite the judges' call. Chance said the decision had nothing to do with his opinion on the verdict and had everything to do with the fact he had a vacancy for his featherweight title.

Reid announced at the postfight news conference that Chance had given the belt to Tapia, sending Arum into a tizzy and prompting him to declare that Top Rank would no longer associate with the IBA. Chance said that had Reid not done that and the announcement been made several days later, the media would not have tied the act to the judges' decision. But Chance admitted the right move would have been to have Tapia fight someone else for the still-vacant belt.

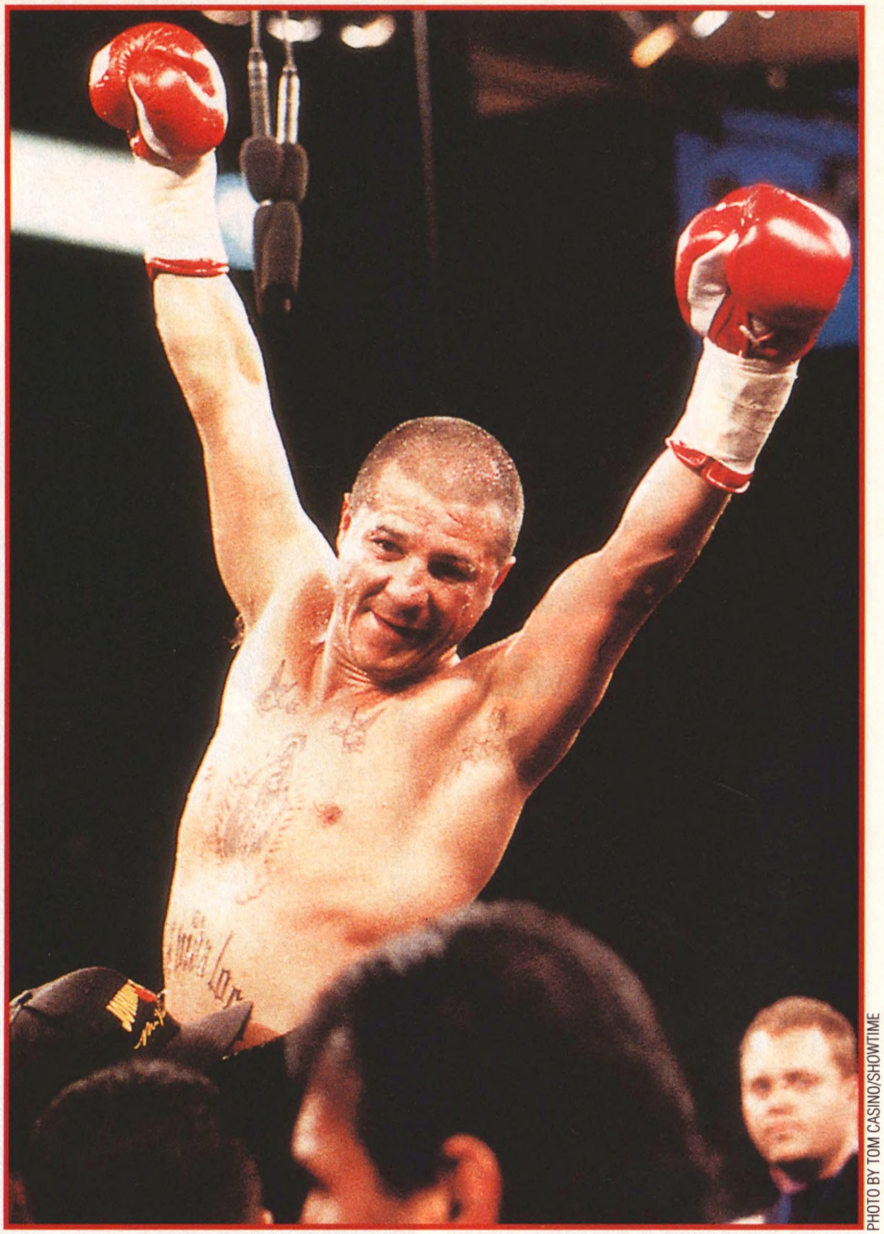


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

The ecstasy before the agony: Tapia celebrates after the final bell, convinced that he has reversed his only career loss. But the judges (as well as most of the ringside media) didn't see it that way.

"I screwed up, and I'm big enough to face the truth," Chance said. "The mistake was announcing it Saturday night. If we had waited a couple of weeks, this wouldn't have happened.

"This has caused a very big turmoil, and I tell you with all my heart that I didn't do this at all based on the fight itself. I have a vacancy at that class, and Johnny's a great kid, very promotable, a champion with a heart of a lion. That's why I gave him my belt to represent the IBA."

But Teresa Tapia said Chance felt the judging was not correct and offered her husband the belt as a result.

"Dean came in and said Johnny was screwed, that he was totally robbed," Teresa Tapia said. "He said he felt Johnny deserved the belt and asked if he would accept it."

She said neither she nor her husband had any qualms about taking the belt, citing the precedent set in February when the WBO gave its 122-pound title back to Marco Antonio Barrera despite the fact that he lost a controversial decision to Erik Morales. Teresa, who still asserts that her husband won the first fight with Ayala on June 26, 1999, said the margin in the second fight was wider than that of the first.

(Continued on page 96)

BRITISH OLYMPIC CHAMP AUDLEY HARRISON

Is He The Next Lennox Lewis– Or The New Frank Bruno?

By Brian Doogan

Starved of successful practitioners among boxing's big men for too many years, Britain is in danger of becoming gluttonous.

Lennox Lewis is nearing the end of a career that has belatedly reached fulfillment, and the talk in London is of 2000 Olympic super heavyweight gold medalist Audley Harrison maintaining the British succession to the world heavyweight crown. The ghost of failures past has been exorcised, Tommy Farr, Don Cockell, Henry Cooper, Brian London, Frank Bruno (briefly WBC title-holder but twice rendered semiconscious by the vicious onslaught of Mike Tyson) all distant memories. Regal and ruthless, Lewis has restored the idea of dominance in the ring being a British birthright. Like London buses, you may wait an eternity, but then two always seem to come together.

At 6'6" and 250 pounds, the 29-year-old graduate of Brunel University—as well as the school of hard knocks—has the kind of physique to carry the aspirations of his countrymen. He has significant submissions on his resume, too. Olympic gold is not necessarily worthwhile currency once the amateur vest is cast aside for the privilege of being paid, but Floyd Patterson, Muhammad Ali, Joe Frazier, George Foreman, and Lewis all cashed in with considerable reward in the pressurized business of professional prize fighting. Training with pros for the past year will help Harrison complete a transition that is by no means guaranteed to be seamless, while his gregarious, quick-witted personality will undoubtedly assist his projection in the media.

PHOTOS BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Proudly displaying the Union Jack, Harrison became the first man since Chris Finnegan in 1968 to bring Olympic boxing gold home to England. He also has the potential to follow in fellow Brit Lennox Lewis' footsteps as a dominant professional heavyweight.

Despite an injured knuckle, Harrison routed Mukhtarkhan Dildabekov of Kazakhstan in the Olympic finals (above), and celebrated enthusiastically (below) when his hand was raised at the end. Harrison won by a 30-16 score, falling just one point short of forcing a stoppage.

When a news reporter put it to him on his return to England from Sydney that he risks having his facial features distorted drastically by less handsome pugs, Harrison produced his effusive smile and declared with mock satisfaction: "Science is wonderful. They now have some great plastic surgeons out there."

Paying for a face lift, even if the damage is done by toothy Tyson, will require only loose change. Harrison's earning potential could finance an army. A ballpark estimate of $100-million is conservative if the Londoner realizes his aim to be world heavyweight champion inside three years. A relatively late entry to the professional ranks makes this ambitious timetable unavoidable, but one Olympian who insists Harrison is not racing against time is Sugar Ray Leonard, a man who in his heyday made time stand still more masterfully than most.

"He's 29, and that's a perfect age," declared Leonard, one of a host of suitors, including Lennox Lewis and Evander Holyfield, who sought Harrison's ear following his authoritative Olympic triumph. "Maturity, physical and emotional, usually hits a fighter around 30. Everything is there, albeit not interminably.

"When I fought Marvin Hagler, I was 30. It made a difference. I had more muscle definition and was precisely at my physical peak. When I was fighting Roberto Duran and Tommy Hearns at welterweight six, seven years earlier, I wouldn't have had the capacity to take Hagler on, not on level terms any-

Italy's Paolo Vidoz eats a left uppercut from the 6'6", 250-pound Harrison in the semifinals. Harrison held just a three-point lead heading into the final round, but then scored a standing eight-count and pulled away from Vidoz for a lopsided victory.

way. So I don't regard Audley's age as a negative at all. He's approaching the height of his powers, and now is the time to see to what extent they will take him."

They have already taken him a long way from the delinquency that characterized much of his youth. Shoplifting and burglary were staple activities of the gang he chose to run with as a tear-away teenager in West London. He was expelled from Northwood Hills school for bullying before achieving similar notoriety at Whitmore in Harrow. But it was after being enrolled in a special school for problem juveniles that he became involved in a fight that led ultimately to a 32-month prison sentence.

"Initially, I was put on remand at Feltham, a young offenders' institute, and although a lot of people have bad experiences in there, it was good for me. I had been kicked out of home because my dad couldn't put up with me and my brothers. I was out on the street," recalled Harrison, sufficiently articulate to have written a 100,000-word dissertation on amateur boxing as part of his degree in sports science and leisure management. "At Feltham, I got three meals a day and I was comfortable."

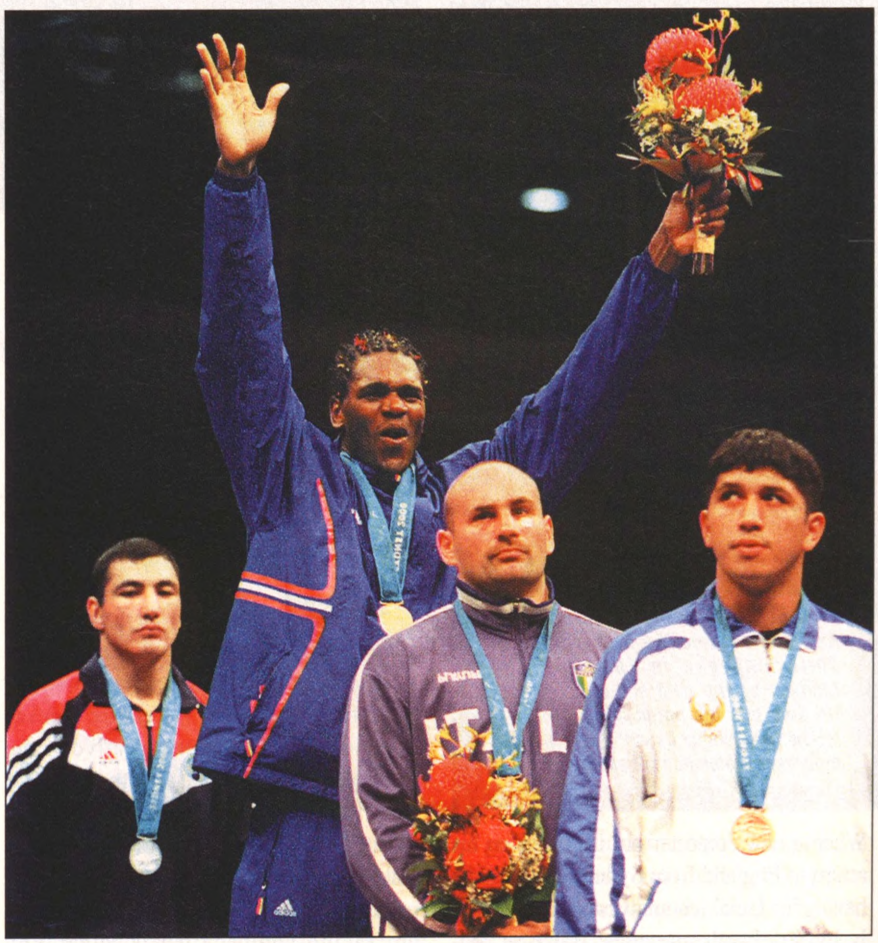
But after being released on bail, he encountered further trouble and was charged with stealing a gold ring. Though found not guilty, he was finally jailed for the earlier gang fight and served half of his 32-month sentence.

"I was 17 when I went in and 19 when I came out," he recalled. "I realized then I had to make up for lost time."

A promising footballer, he might have had trials with Watford, a moderately successful English league club, but a chipped ankle bone and hernia problems that required three operations put paid to his notions of being the next Pele. The idea of becoming the next Ali hit him only after yet another altercation against a man of similar build to himself that prompted more than one observer of the unsanctioned bout to compliment him on his fine fighting technique.

"I went to a nearby gym soon after that and realized that boxing was a sport I could master," said Harrison, first schooled at Repton Amateur Boxing Club. "The Olympics eventually became my goal, and I rededicated my life toward being a success in the ring."

Restoring balance to the erratic behavioral pattern he had slipped progressively



Harrison stands head-and-shoulders above fellow medalists (from back) Dildabekov, Vidoz, and Rustam Saidov of Uzbekistan. But outshining that trio does not assure pro success, as current Commonwealth heavyweight champion Danny Williams, a potential future opponent of Harrison's, warns.

into was success enough. But destiny beckoned. Sydney lay at the end of his road to Damascus, the Olympic flame burning fiercely the whole way. Not even the damaged tendons around the knuckle of the middle finger on his left hand, a persistent source of pain for two years and aggravated alarmingly in his quarterfinal match, would deny him. Against the ponderous Italian southpaw Paolo Vidoz in the semifinal, Harrison demonstrated his dexterity and pronounced edge in hand speed to win 32-16 (the bout should have been stopped on the new Olympic 15-point rule, but the official whose responsibility it was to tell the referee to stop the bout failed to do his job) and set up a final showdown with Mukhtarkhan Dildabekov of Kazakhstan. By now, his hurt hand bore a swelling the size of a golf ball.

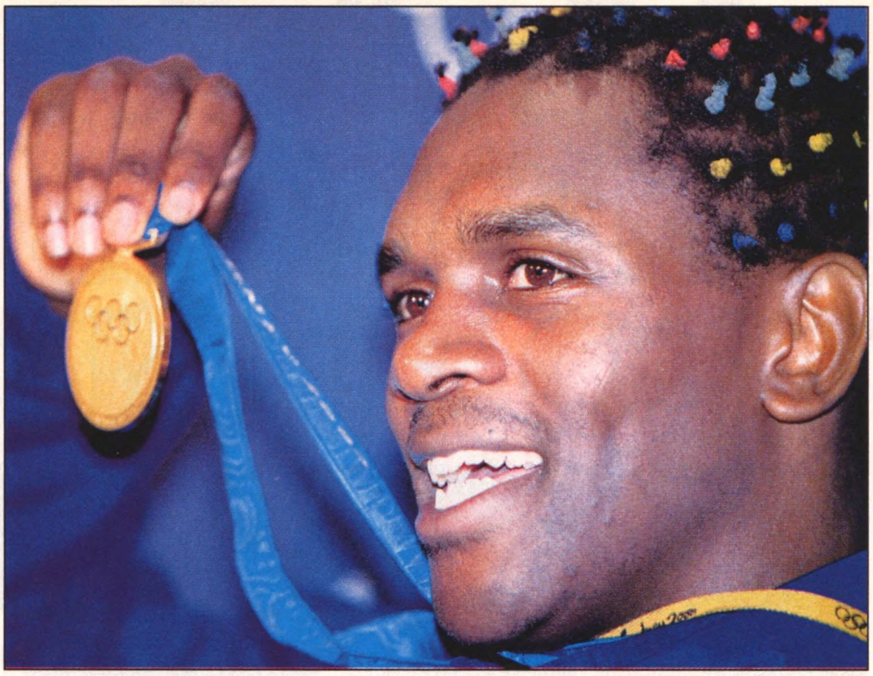
"There was a danger I would not get past the medical," Harrison revealed. "I was up at five o'clock that morning. I couldn't sleep with worry. The situation was being taken out of my control.

"My medical people tried everything they could to get the swelling down, and amid all the fuss I forgot to shave. When I reported to the doctor, the first thing he noticed was my unshaven face, and it bothered him greatly. In amateur boxing, it is obligatory that you are clean-shaven. He sent me out to shave it off, and when I came back, he looked at my face, virtually forgot about my hand, and passed me for a fight I might easily have been prevented from competing in."

He made the most of his good fortune. Maximizing his physical advantages, he accumulated a lead with fluent, furious bursts and defeated the Kazakhstani emphatically, 30-16.

In the appropriately grand setting of Home House, London's most glamorous private members' club (which can count Madonna among its patrons), Harrison held court less than a week after touching down at Heathrow Airport to be hailed by well-wishers like a returning conqueror.

"Within five fights, I believe I could be British champion, and my ambitious nature means I won't rest there," he announced. "I hope to realize my ambition of being heavyweight champion of the world in three years. People say there's a huge gap between amateur and professional boxing, but I am prepared. Lennox Lewis and Evander Holyfield have both told me that the training they did in the amateurs was more physically demanding than what they encountered as pros.



The handsome Harrison shows off his affable smile and his gold medal. The Olympic champion has overcome his troubled past and has a gregarious personality that should help him win over the media and become an attraction in the pro game.

"By the time I am reaching my goal, both Lennox and Evander will be happily retired. A new generation will have taken over. I try not to think about the weight of expectation, but I don't feel any pressure with the spotlight on me. I aspire to be like Muhammad Ali. I want to get to the top of the mountain. I believe I can."

Dissenters are not difficult to find.

"This is a different business, and he'll only get an idea of that when he takes his first steps," said fellow Londoner Danny Williams, the Commonwealth heavyweight champion. "In Lennox Lewis' amateur days, the only difference between that and professional boxing was the pace of the bouts. With computerized scoring now, it's a different style altogether that's required.

"Audley's punching power for a big man is not that impressive, and his stamina will need to be improved upon. If I am British champion when he believes he is ready to fight for the domestic title, I am certain he will avoid me. He will look for different avenues. We sparred over six rounds, and Audley was thoroughly disciplined.

"Audley's a good guy, an intelligent guy, and it's a great achievement to be Olympic champion. But amateurs and pros? It's the difference between night and day."

It is now, said Frank Maloney, the manager of Lewis, that the hard work will really start for Harrison.

"I know the dedication it's taken, the hardship he's been through in the last four years, all the sacrifices he's made before his present feeling of fulfillment and euphoria," Maloney said. "He did a great job preparing himself for what he had to go through and also of presenting and selling himself to the public at large, here and in America. But he will have to go through it all again to realize his dream of following Lennox from Olympic super heavyweight gold to the heavyweight championship of the world.

"Pain, suffering, even setbacks go with the territory. The first few chapters of his book are now complete. But he's moving toward the middle chapters, which are the most difficult if it is all to have a happy ending. Audley's fame will be short-lived if he doesn't do it properly."

His first professional fight, he anticipates, will be next March or April. After that, Audley Harrison's prospects of being the rightful heir to Lewis—or alternatively to the tradition of British heavyweights assuming the horizontal from any number of positions—will become clearer. ■

Brian Doogan is* THE RING'S *European correspondent.

A Byrd's Eye View:

ONE KLITSCHKO TOO MANY

PHOTOS BY JOHN HORNEWER

Despite his size disadvantage, Byrd got off to a good start against Klitschko, but things took a turn for the worse when the American injured his left eye near the end of the second round. With his vision impaired, defensive master Byrd became much easier to hit than usual.

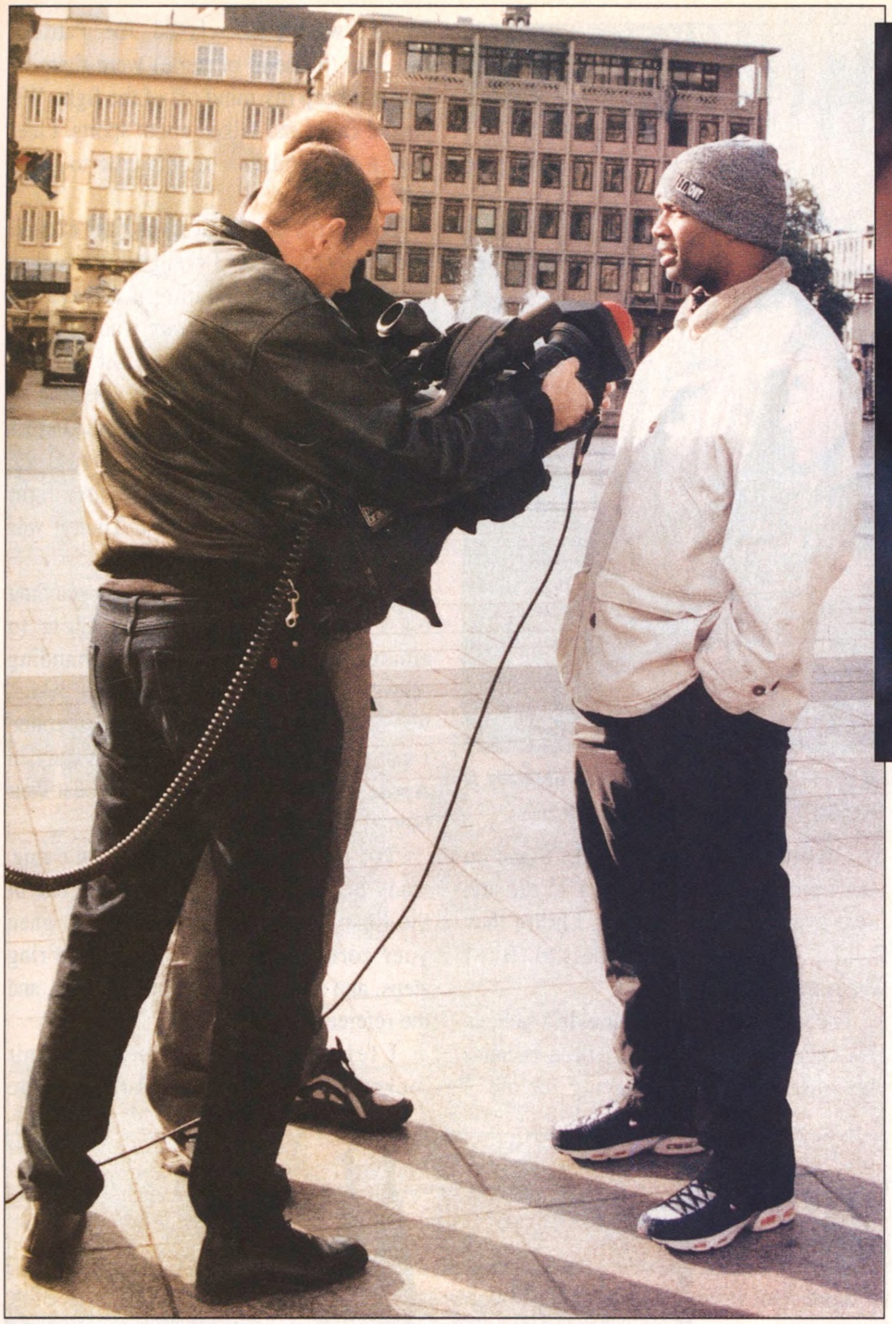
By Chris Byrd

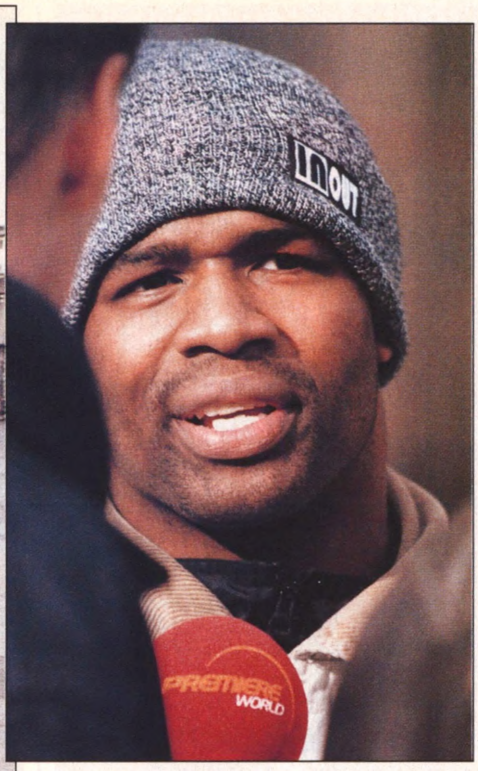
(On October 14, Chris Byrd lost a 12-round decision to Wladimir Klitschko in Cologne, Germany. This is his firsthand account of that fight and the events surrounding it.)

Soon after Wladimir Klitschko knocked out Monte Barrett in July, I received a call informing me that Wladimir wanted to fight me. Six months had gone by since I'd won the WBO heavyweight title from Wladimir's brother, Vitaly, and I would have liked to have had a tuneup prior to such a big fight, but my new German promoter would not allow me to. But as those who know me will tell you, I'll fight anybody, anytime.

Still, the last time I took that much time off, I ended up taking a punch from Ike Ibeabuchi and got stopped with one second left in the fifth round. I can't say that it didn't creep into the back of my mind that something like that could happen again. But I couldn't afford to worry about it too much, so training began.

In the middle of my camp, I had to go to Germany for a press conference, which interfered with my plans to get my hard running done on the sands of Virginia Beach. But I went anyway. When I got back, a couple of sparring partners fell through, which was discouraging. But we kept looking, and finally asked Derrick Jefferson, who is a good friend, to help out, and he was there for me. I also got to spar with a tall kid from Monroe, Michigan, named Kevin Monte. Overall,





Byrd is interviewed by German TV outside of the Cologne Cathedral as part of the build-up to his fight with Klitschko. Byrd called the famous church "an amazing sight."

sparring went well throughout camp.

My family (my mom and dad, wife Tracy, brothers Patrick and Joe, who is married to Tracy's sister Gay, who was also with us, and my mother-in-law Mary) and I, along with a group of friends, left for Germany seven days prior to the fight. My wife took food with her just in case we ran into the same problem we did when I went there to fight Vitaly. That time, we couldn't find anything to eat that agreed with me, and I got diarrhea and lost a lot of weight.

The flight was nicer this time because when you're the champ, they buy you business class tickets instead of coach. The last time, when we arrived in Germany, the media was there to meet us at the airport. We had no idea what sort of greeting we'd get this time. We finally landed the morning of October 8, but there was no media because it was so early and there had been a boxing show in Berlin the night before. Actually, I don't really care about all that stuff. I just wanted to box and wished it was already Saturday. It's so hard to wait, but keeping busy helps the time go faster.

On Monday we had another press conference, and it went very well. Both Klitschko and myself are gentlemen, so I knew there wouldn't be any badmouthing or fighting. Most of the questions were directed toward Wladimir, but that didn't surprise me because that's how it was during the first press conference.

The funny part was when Vitaly came up to me to say hello, and in the process he was feeling my arms and chest. I guess he must have been checking to see if I was in shape. I also had a few moments to have chat with Istvan Kovacs. We talked about our promoter, Universum, and how badly he wants to fight Naseem Hamed. I know how he feels, wanting to fight someone so bad and not having it happen.

Tuesday was a bit boring. We played cards and just hung out in the room until it was time to do a little bit of publicity down at the cathedral, which is a famous church in Cologne. It was huge and very beautiful, and they actually had dead bishops buried there in tombs. It was an amazing sight.

On Wednesday there was a public workout, which was a lot of fun. Lots of people showed up. Wladimir went first while I waited. When it was my turn, I had to walk past Wladimir and his team, which included Vitaly, who bumped me with his shoulder. I'm not sure what he was trying to do. Maybe he thought he would psych me out, but I just smiled and kept walking.

The workout went great. It wasn't a true workout, just a show for the public. But the fans liked it and seemed to like me,

As big as* Star Wars*! An indication of how important the Klitschko-Byrd fight was in Germany is illustrated by this banner outside of the mall where a public workout was held.

especially when I threw my T-shirt into the crowd.

I liked Cologne and was surprised that the German people were so nice. They have a totally different way of living compared to the United States. For one thing, they love to smoke. Lung cancer has to be the leading cause of death.

On Thursday, the Cologne newspaper came to the hotel to do a story on my family and me. The German press really seemed taken by the whole family concept. Most of the day, however, my wife and my attorney/friend, John Hornewer, spent their time searching for ground beef for a spaghetti dinner that Tracy wanted to cook for me the day before the fight. Finding ground beef in a foreign country is no easy task, but they succeeded.

Friday was weigh-in day. I was very relaxed and calm, which is strange for me. The weigh-in was a big event. Wladimir went first with his crazy music playing. Then I came down the elevator—the Germans' idea of an exciting entrance—to gospel music. I weighed 96.7 kilograms, which they told me was around 213 pounds. I still don't know for sure what I really weighed in pounds.

Afterward, Wladimir came out again so that the media could take pictures. He was wearing heeled shoes that made me look even shorter. I heard Tracy yell, "Stand on your tiptoes; he's got shoes on." I did and made everybody laugh. Later, I heard they thought I was being disrespectful. But I was just being me.

The day of the fight, I couldn't believe how calm I felt. It must have been because everyone I know was praying for me. I hoped I wasn't too relaxed. Joe, Patrick, and Tim (a friend of mine) were there to help me keep my mind off of the fight. We played cards and talked about sports. I ate, took a nap, and then it was time to go to the arena.

I was still unusually calm, but excited and ready to fight. I went to the locker room and waited. Waiting is always the worst part for me. My father wanted me to warm up by hitting the mitts, but I knew I shouldn't because I had been sweating so much, and didn't want to be drained before I got into the ring. When they told me there was only 10 minutes before fight time, I began to shadow box. Then it was time to go.

I came into the arena and was standing on a platform, waiting for them to announce my name. As I was standing there, I heard people start to boo, which was completely different than the reception I got in Berlin when I fought Vitaly in April. Must have been because I beat their boy.

The next thing I know, I'm in the ring, ready to go. I can tell you that it's one of the loneliest feelings in the world when your corner people walk down the ring steps, and it's just you, your opponent, and the referee.

I felt good coming out. Wladimir looked very determined, but after two

Chris and Tracy pose for the local newspaper photographer on the balcony of their Cologne hotel room. The German media was fascinated by the fact that fighting is a family affair with the Byrds.

***David vs. Goliath:** The size difference between the fighters was obvious when they posed for photographs at the weigh-in. Maybe Byrd should have used a slingshot.*

rounds it seemed like he was getting frustrated. Unfortunately, at the end of the second, I got hit in the left eye, and it felt like something scratched my eyeball. It immediately started to swell, and things went downhill after that.

I couldn't see well enough to do what I wanted to, and by the sixth round, my right eye was starting to swell, too. I'd trained so hard for the fight, and couldn't believe it had turned into this. If you know my boxing style, you know I rarely get hit, but by round nine, my right eye was completely closed and I was getting hit repeatedly. I was dropped by what they later told me was a right. I got up and told the ref I was all right, and I was. Klitschko's punches were hard, but no harder than anyone else's. To me, all heavyweights hit hard.

I was knocked down again in the 11th, and knew I was way behind. But I'm not a quitter and I was determined to finish the fight. By the 12th round, I could hardly see anything. My dad had wanted to throw in the towel the previous round. I'm so glad he didn't; champions should never quit. All I could do the final round was move and pray for a miracle. When the bell rang, I was glad it was over because I couldn't see—and I knew that I'd lost.

I told John that I was sorry, and then

(Continued on page 97)

Leave Mike Tyson, Shane Mosley, Butterbean, Andrew Golota, Christy Martin, Mia St. John, Lou Duva, Evander Holyfield, Bob Arum, and Don King on a South China Sea island for more than a month, tell them to match guts and guile to determine who's best, and you have The Ring's version of ...

FIGHT GAME SURVIVOR

By Jeff Ryan

For those of you just tuning in, welcome to *Fight Game Survivor*. Contrary to what you might think, this has nothing to do with David Telesco trying to last 12 rounds with Roy Jones or Roberto Duran trying to last another 12 months with Father Time. No, this is about 16 castaways stranded on an island in the South China Sea for 39 days. Their goal: to "outplay," "outlast," and "outwit" each other, though, admittedly, that last one may be a bit much to ask from a few members of *this* group.

Initially competing as two separate tribes, Sornpichai and Pisnurachank, the survivors are now merged and squaring off against each other under the banner of Kratchingdaeng. Not since Muhammad Ali-Rudy Lubbers has this part of the world seen a battle so captivating. The smell of desperation (not to mention perspiration) hangs in the air. The tension is so thick, you can cut it with the disposable razor Lucia Rijker smuggled in to keep her underarms from looking like Don King's coiffure.

Okay, let's meet the competitors. In no particular order, they are Mike Tyson, Lennox Lewis, Oscar De La Hoya, Shane Mosley, Butterbean, Andrew Golota, Christy Martin, Mia St. John, Al Certo, Jim Lampley, Lou Duva, Evander Holyfield, David Tua, Bob Arum, King, and Rijker. Ferdie Pacheco is the show's host, doctor on call, and lone voice of authority.

The Arum-King alliance didn't last long

We pick up the action with only a week to go before the lone survivor emerges as the winner of $100-million, a Rolls Royce, and a pair of balcony seats from Philadelphia's Blue Horizon (not tickets, mind you, but actual chairs that have rotted out of the floor). For those of

you not familiar with the game, here are the guidelines as recited to us earlier by unofficial official Harold Lederman: "*Fight Game Survivor* is governed by the rules of the Borneo Athletic Commission. The three-stingray bite rule is not in effect, there is no saving by the tribal gong, and in the event of nausea caused by the ingestion of rodents or larvae, you must duck behind the farthest neutral tree cluster in order to vomit."

DAY 33: Only eight contestants remain, and nobody is feeling secure considering the surprise ousting early in the competition of Mosley, a guy who basically kept under the radar, made friends, and tried not to backstab anyone. Word is that his undoing came at the hands of Butterbean, who was able to talk his teammates from the Sornpichai Tribe into voting Sugar Shane off the island. The Bean was apparently smarting over an unfortunate incident in which Mosley went fishing, mistook the skinny-dipping heavyweight for a whale, and tried to harpoon him.

St. John models her line of island wear

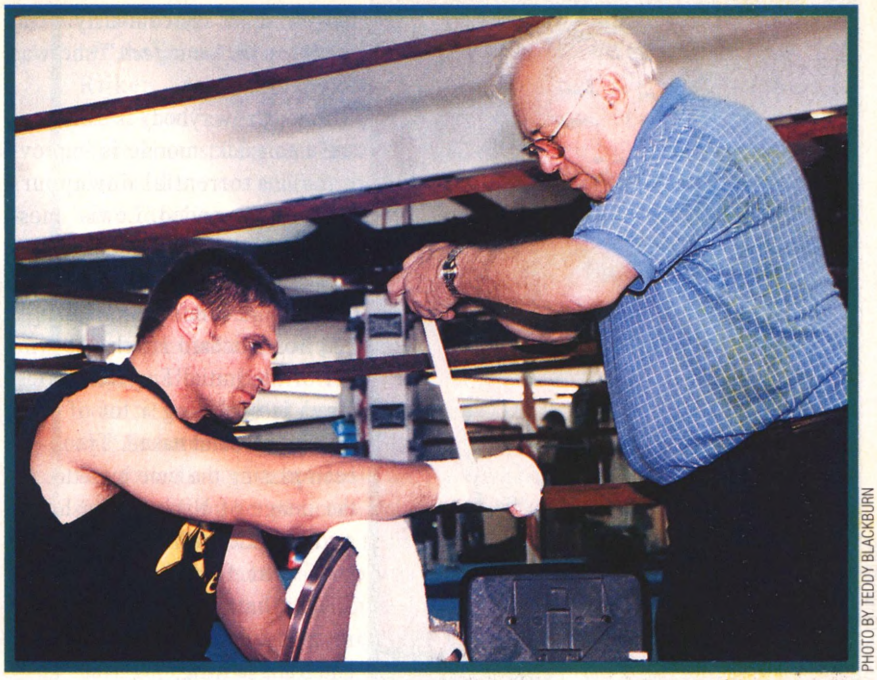


PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

Golota and Certo were among the first to be voted off the island

The competitors are dropping like flies, though, ironically, the real flies (and mosquitoes) around here seem to be in fine health. Golota started the exodus a few weeks ago when he tried to quit the competition during the bug-eating contest. It was quite a spectacle as Certo first demanded that he stay, then tried to force a beetle into his mouth. Golota fought him off, turned his back, and walked away as the rest of the castaways showered him with coconut milk and pelted him with pieces of tree bark.

Trainer and tailor Certo was himself jettisoned three nights later after the guys in the group were dissatisfied with the three-piece suits he'd made them out of dried seaweed. Tua was the next to go (his haircut scared everyone), followed by Mosley, and then Butterbean, who voted himself off when he learned that the island didn't have a Denny's or Bob's Big Boy. Lampley was an obvious choice to go considering that no one in his alliance ever understood him. His parting words to the group, "You pusillanimous simpletons have subverted our esprit de corps!" are still ringing in everyone's ears.

Arum exited when his alliance with King lasted about as long as it took D.K. to tell everyone his rival had lied when he said he had nothing to do with the making of Ali-Antonio Inoki. Perhaps the most troubling departure of all, though, was that of De La Hoya. After winning a singing competition that entitled him to a night on a yacht anchored off the island, "The Golden Boy" was pleasantly surprised to find that his father, Joel, had been brought on board. The next day, Joel came ashore to meet the other castaways, but instead of bringing them care packages, he tried to fire them. Dad was banished, and hours later, Oscar was told to turn in his torch and wave bye-bye too.

DAY 34: Today came the first "immunity challenge" of the competition. When host Pacheco announced that the winner of a special event was going to be granted immunity, a wide-eyed King shouted, "From prosecution?" Told that, no, it simply meant from being voted off the island that evening, a sulking King buried his head in his bowl of rice and simply muttered to himself.

The immunity challenge consisted of the eight remaining contestants standing on a thin plank of wood raised several feet off the ground. The last one to remain upright would be awarded a talisman that granted him or her immunity. While the others teetered, wavered, and eventually fell off one by one, Holyfield stayed in place for 3 hours 20 minutes and was declared the winner. The trick,

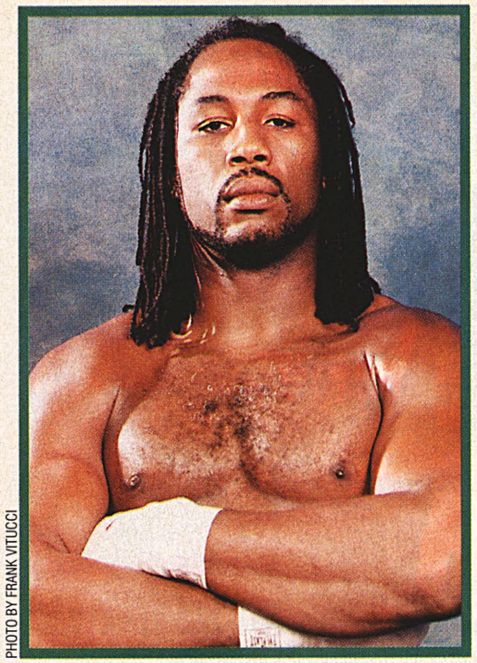


PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

Lewis exited gracefully

he said, was just remaining as rigid, immobile, and seemingly oblivious to his surroundings as he had been when he fought John Ruiz.

That Holyfield, he's a real character, isn't he? At one point during last week's relentless rainstorms, Rijker advised him to put on his rubbers. The father of nine looked at her incredulously. "Uh, the ones for your *feet*," she was forced to explain.

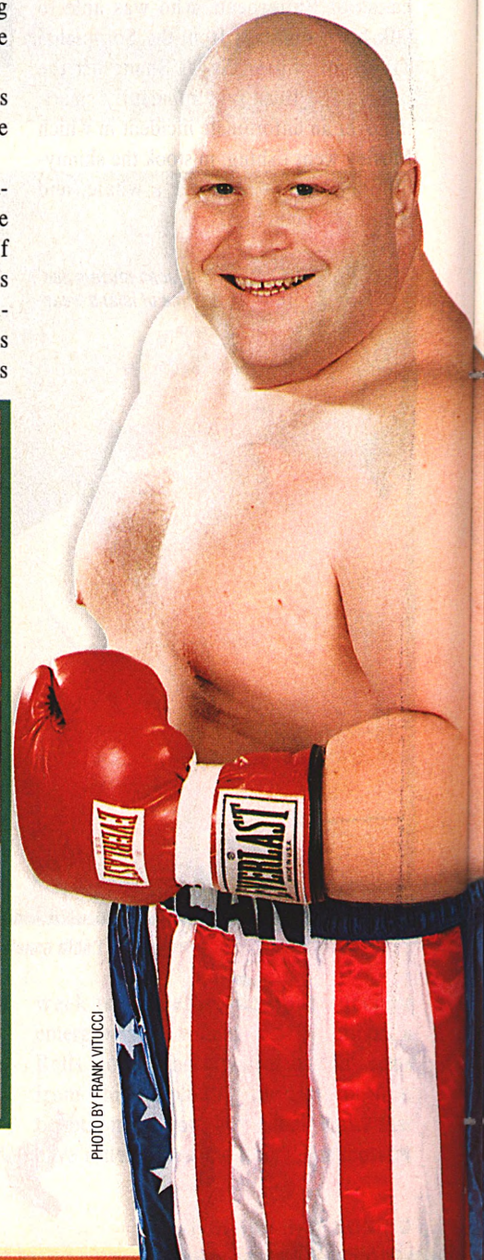
Though everybody is exhausted and homesick, morale is improving. The torrential downpours have finally ended, Lewis' mosquito bites are healing, and everyone is finding ways to make themselves more comfortable. Taking a cue from Richard Hatch, the winner of the initial *Survivor* series, Duva is spending a lot of time parading around naked. Tyson has been passing the time by tattooing the image of Nikita Khrushchev on his ankle with squid ink. And new best friends Martin and Rijker have been exchanging recipes for caterpillar casserole and Rat a la King.

DAY 35: Last night, it was Captain Lou who was voted off the island. No explanation required.

It's good to see that despite the cutthroat nature of the competition, the contestants aren't thinking entirely of themselves. For example, Martin has been patiently braiding Lewis' dreadlocks every morning, King has let his island mates cook and eat the wild birds that have been nesting in his hair, and St. John has graciously allowed the remaining survivors to use one of her bras as a hammock.

DAY 36: Okay, so trivia isn't St. John's forte. She lost an immunity challenge when she was unable to correctly identify some famous lines in boxing history. She mistook, "Down goes Frazier! Down goes Frazier!" for Lampley's call of the Rick Frazier-Roy Jones bout. She thought, "And Schmeling is down!" came from the first round of the Al "Blue" Lewis-Max Schmeling rematch. And she was sure that, "You're blowin' it, son!" had something to do with William Joppy

"Denny's, here I come"



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Duva's less-is-more strategy backfired

PHOTO BY CHRIS CASSIDY

"Lucia said what!?"

taking French horn lessons in high school.

St. John sure looked like a goner, but it was actually King who got sent packing. His attitude and temper, after all, had been grating on people. The last straw: King bellowed, "Te-heh, that's fantabulous news!" when told that there would be a tribal council meeting, then threw a tantrum when he was told that didn't mean Jose Sulaiman and the gang from the WBC were hydroplaning in.

DAY 37: Tyson won the latest immunity challenge when he was able to correctly list all of the prescription behavioral medicine he's been on since he first turned pro, name all of Holyfield's children, and translate into English all the words on Roy Jones' rap record. Mr. Holyfield was today's voting casualty, but it's probably for the best. That rice and stingray diet was hardly agreeing with "The Real Deal." In fact, he dropped so much weight in the past month that he's planning to challenge Eric Morel for the WBA flyweight title as soon as he gets home.

DAY 38: St. John got voted off the island when Martin and Rijker, angered that "The Knockout" was spending too much time staring at her reflection in the water and not enough time foraging for food, formed an anti-Mia alliance and then talked Tyson into voting along with them. Saying St. John overstayed her welcome is putting it mildly. Hours before the tribal council snuffed out her flame, she alienated everyone by refusing to walk across hot coals for fear of ruining her pedicure. And if she had mentioned one more time that the mud volcano was great for tightening skin and unclogging pores, things could have gotten really ugly.

Only four castaways remain and the pressure is mounting. Just one day left to go.

DAY 39: Judgment Day. First came the business of eliminating two more survivors, and when the votes were cast, it was Martin and Lewis (Christy and Lennox, not Dean and Jerry) who passed the torches. Lewis exited gracefully, but Martin took the opportunity to let out her frustrations on Rijker.

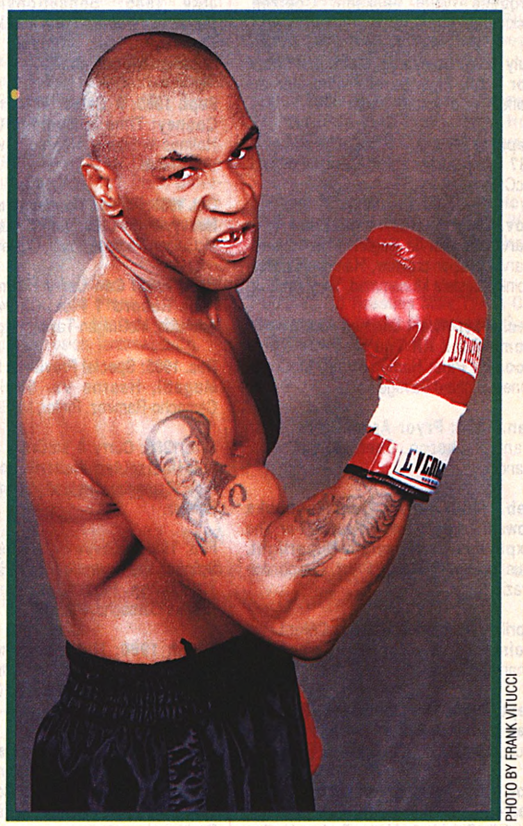
"I trusted you, girl," Martin snapped, "and you betrayed me. Tyson may be a snake, but you're a rat. If I saw you bleeding to death, I'd hide the Avetine. If you were in the middle of a riot started by Rock Newman, I wouldn't warn you that a thug was about to blindside you with a cell phone. If Fan Man was descending on the ring during one of your fights, I'd grab two orange flashlights and guide him in for a landing on your cranium. Given the chance, I'd sneak Tabasco sauce into your water bottle and itching powder into your trunks. Hell, I'd even give Ike Ibeabuchi the number of your hotel room!"

As Rijker bowed her head and started to weep, the last seven survivors to be voted off—Martin, Holyfield, St. John, Duva, King, Lewis, and De La Hoya—prepared to vote. One by one they filled out their ballots and placed them in a sacred spitbucket. Pacheco then picked up the bucket, reached in, recoiled disgustedly at the discovery that nobody remembered to empty the saliva, then dried off the ballots and tallied the votes. There was dead silence for what seemed like an eternity, then Pacheco's voice filled the air.

"The final count is four to three, and the winner is ... Mike Tyson."

So there he is, your ultimate fight game survivor. But was there ever any doubt? When you've survived a childhood in Brownsville, Brooklyn, reform school, 15 heavyweight title bouts, car accidents, prison, a contract with Don King, suspensions, two failed marriages, and a foray into pro wrestling, it takes a lot more than 39 days on a rainy island, a steady diet of rice, and the sight of Butterbean naked to break your spirit. ■

Jeff Ryan is a longtime columnist and a regular contributor to this magazine.



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Tyson: The ultimate survivor

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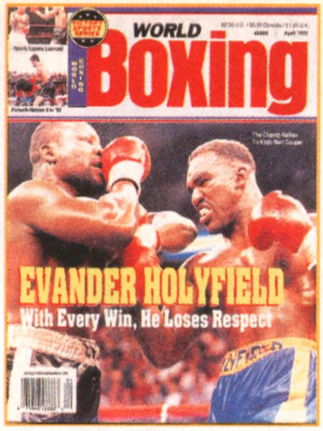

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KIRK JOHNSON DECKS HIS DOUBTS

A Russian Nightmare Becomes A Sweet Dream

By Ted Bodenrader

Kirk Johnson was pacing the dressing room floor when the cameras began to roll.

These were not the HBO network cameras, which were zooming in from various angles about the Mohegan Sun Pavilion, preparing to shoot the evening's feature presentation. Rather, these were cameras lodged deep within Johnson's frantic mind, and they were casting a dark picture indeed.

You could say they were airing coming attractions of sorts, previews that rolled through Johnson's imagination featuring every possible scenario, every conceivable plotline that was about to unravel in just a few mere moments on a squared canvas stage. And not one of them had a happy ending.

"It was so bad, I almost didn't come out of the dressing room," Johnson admitted. "I was incredibly nervous, thinking about what was going to happen. I imagined that I was going 12 hard rounds with this guy and there was no way I'd be able to hurt him. No matter what, I gave myself no chance of winning this fight."

That's because Johnson viewed Oleg Maskaev much the way everyone else did who piled into the casino tent to indulge in a Saturday evening full of engaging fistic theatrics. He didn't see his opponent as one made of flesh and bone and blood. He didn't see his opponent as one susceptible to pain and fatigue and exhaustion.

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

PHOTO BY KEVIN BALDWIN

Johnson was all smiles after his explosive, through-the-ropes knockout of highly regarded Oleg Maskaev. The upset victory catapulted the previously unproven Johnson directly into title contention.

Instead, what Johnson saw within his troubled psyche was an invincible Russian fighting machine. What he saw was Ivan Drago.

Just a few days before, with monitors hooked up to Maskaev's hulking torso, Johnson caught a glimpse of the Russian heavyweight's heartbeat rate during a routine prefight examination. Maskaev's heart was beating at a rather rapid rate, which generally is not a good thing, but to Johnson, it was a powerful, intimidating pounding.

"It was a 67 or something like that," Johnson said. "Mine was only 46. Right then, I started asking myself what the hell I was doing, fighting this guy. He obviously wasn't human. I was asking myself over and over again what I had gotten myself into here."

It only got worse at the customary weigh-in, when Maskaev—all 6'3", 240 pounds of him—clunked down off the scale and turned to the underdog with a chilling glare that spoke, *I must break you.*

As the days, as the hours, as the minutes wound down toward the most definitive moment of Kirk Johnson's life, the images began to bounce through his skull like a music video. The image of Hasim Rahman plastered through the ropes by a spectacular Maskaev right hand, a knockout blow that united him with the ringside patrons at the Atlantic City Convention Center. The image of Maskaev breaking down the indomitable will of Derrick Jefferson with one crunching shot after the next, discarding him in a mere four rounds at the Taj Mahal. The image of Johnson, himself, struggling not once but twice with Al "Ice" Cole, a blown-up cruiserweight who nearly put Johnson's stagnant career on perma-freeze.

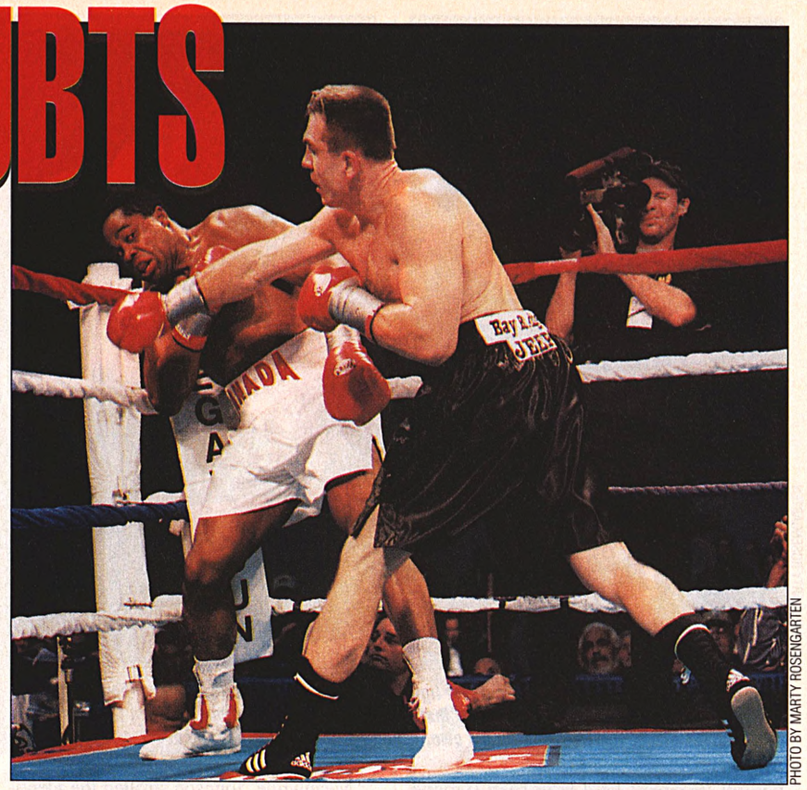

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

A Maskaev right hand just before the end of the first round shook Johnson badly, but the Russian never really had Johnson in trouble again after that.

Quickly, the enemy known as Kirk Johnson's mind had become far more daunting than the gloved enemy down the hall.

"I remember, just as I was coming out, I had decided that this man was invincible," said Johnson. *"There's no way I can beat him. He's like a machine.* That's what I was telling myself."

So, for Johnson, the walk toward the ring was really a lot like the Green Mile, a long, tragic stroll toward what he perceived as a dark, inevitable fate.

And once the opening bell rang, the machine awaiting his arrival instantly began sucking the life out of Johnson, both mentally and physically, just as the Canadian had envisioned. A booming right hand just before the end of the first round instantly put Johnson on life support, leaving him with 60 agonizing seconds in the corner to anticipate the similar torture that would lie ahead.

And it came, sure enough, in the very next round, when Maskaev began to wear Johnson down with chopping overhand rights, rights that connected with numbing impact. Johnson's right-hand counters were met with nothing but air. Ironically, however, it was then, during one of his many woeful misses, that Johnson came to a stirring revelation.

"I noticed every time I would throw the right hand, he would pull back, drop his right, then come straight forward after it missed," said Johnson. "So, after a while, I started missing the right hand on purpose, just so he would go back and then make that little forward move."

At one dramatic moment just a few seconds into the fourth round, Johnson discovered that Oleg Maskaev was human—very much human—and not actually a character in a Sylvester Stallone movie. Nonetheless, you could nearly hear the *Rocky* trumpets in the background right after Johnson threw a lazy right hand that intentionally missed its mark. As Maskaev, 20-3 (15), once again slipped backward responsively, he then rolled forward once again, this time directly into a crushing left hook that landed square on his jaw. It was a plot twist so bizarre, so unpredictable, it ejected the 4,000-plus patrons straight out of their seats.

With 240 pounds of Russian beefcake splattered to the canvas, the longshot Johnson, 30-0-1 (22), would soon help

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Once he settled in, Johnson fought a clever fight, using his speed to avoid being clipped by the onrushing Maskaev. He kept his distance so that Maskaev wouldn't land his booming right, and also intentionally missed several rights of his own, eventually setting up the left hook.

himself to a feast he'd long been starving for. It was his first taste of the heavyweight limelight, and he'd be sure to dig in with both hands.

Eight years of obscurity were swallowed when the 1992 Olympian turned the ensuing moments into a truly dramatic spectacle. By the time the 28-year-old Johnson had completed the five-punch flurry that followed—finished off by a booming left hook to the Russian's temple—it was only fitting that the groggy Maskaev was knocked through the ropes and into the arms of a ringside photographer, amazingly reminiscent of his one-punch slaying of Rahman a year earlier.

You know how the saying goes. Well, it finally came around for Maskaev, and it came around in a big way.

It took trainer Al Gavin and a host of frantic handlers to bring Maskaev back to coherency after dragging him back to his stool, both his vision and his future in desperate need of focus. With a lucrative title shot previously waiting in the wings for the consensus third-ranked heavyweight, Maskaev's American Dream was turned into a chilling horror show.

"I thought I had him," was about all Maskaev could recall about the moments preceding the left hook that turned this *Rocky* scenario into reality.

Meanwhile, Johnson strolled the identical route back toward the same dressing room, where just a half-hour before, he'd been reading himself his Last Rites. This time, however, the Green Mile took on an entirely different meaning. It was money that was on his mind this time, big-time green. It became immediately apparent, while Johnson passed through the chants of the raucous crowd, that the Canadian heavyweight had just become a high-stakes player in boxing's glamour division.

The crowd began chanting in harmonic unison, "Holyfield! Holyfield! Holyfield!" just as a pair of wise, seasoned vets, Larry Merchant and Emanuel Steward, removed their headsets from their ears, still marveling from the thrilling events that unfolded before them.

"What we saw there is what I call a clean-up left hook, and it's the most dangerous punch in boxing," said Steward, arguably the world's premier trainer. "Kirk Johnson just worked it to perfection. He basically hung back and let Maskaev be the aggressor, waited for the opportunity, and he took him out with it. A perfect shot."

Merchant was a mere yardstick away when Rahman was delivered to the HBO commentator's table last year, and not much farther when Maskaev found himself with a similar view in Connecticut.

"I saw a man up there who was badly hurt after the first round," said Merchant. "He came back out, fighting a big, strong, hard-punching heavyweight, did what he had to in order to retool, and he took the big man down. It was impressive to see. He's a real athletic, quick-handed guy, and there aren't a lot of them in the heavyweight division."

Perhaps Merchant is a sucker for

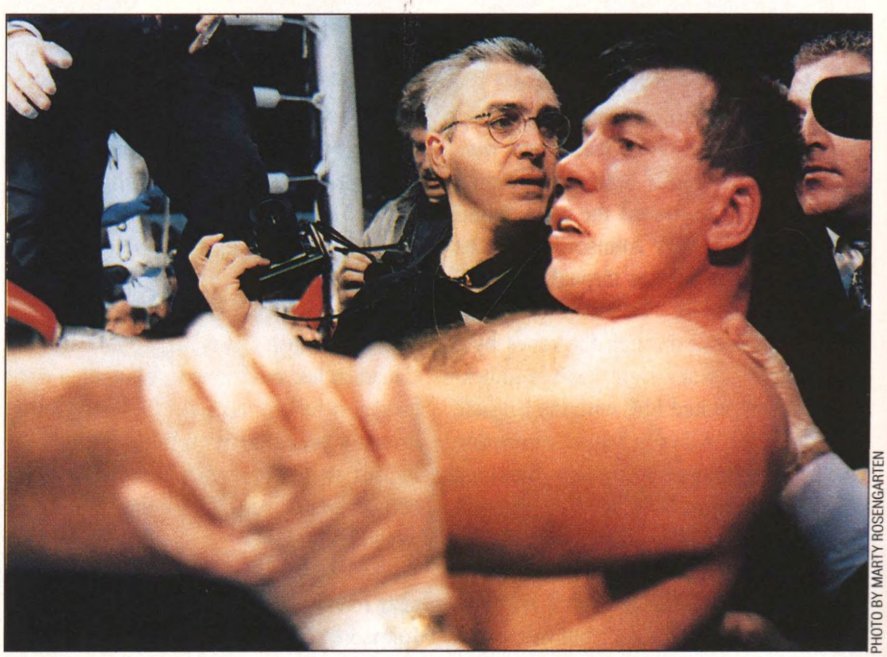

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

After a five-punch flurry from Johnson, Maskaev toppled through the ropes and into the arms of the ringside photographers. It was an ironic ending, considering that Maskaev's rise to title contention began when he sent Hasim Rahman flying out of the ring in similar fashion.

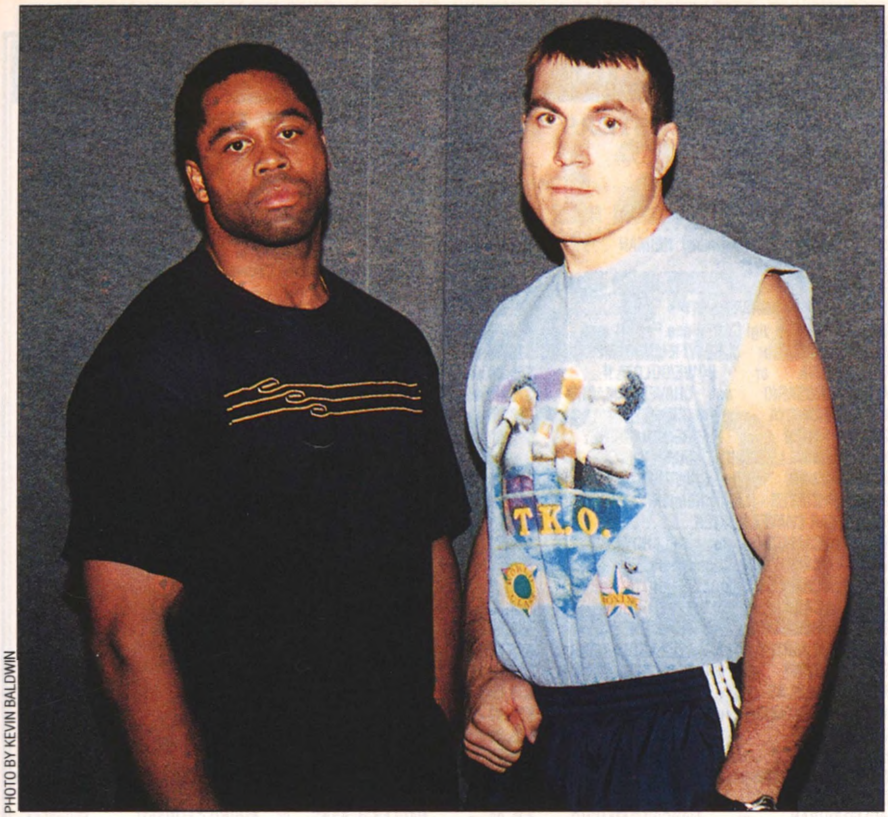

PHOTO BY KEVIN BALDWIN

Johnson and Maskaev pose together the day before the fight. Former Olympian Johnson admitted he was intimidated by Maskaev, especially after seeing him at the weigh-in and the prefight physical.

heavyweight bravado, but the HBO color man was adamant that Johnson was worthy of a shot at Holyfield, the new WBA titlist, or even Lennox Lewis, the real champion.

"Hey, he's an undefeated heavyweight who had a great amateur career," Merchant pointed out. "Why not give him a shot? People have been saying for a long time that there's not much to him because he hasn't been in with the greatest cast of characters, but he proved tonight that he's a legitimate top five or six heavyweight. And he also showed that he can punch a little bit. That's what heavyweight fans want to see. Right now, the fate of the division is in the hands of Lennox Lewis and who he wants to fight, but I don't think it would be a bad thing to give Kirk Johnson a shot."

Perhaps Merchant's partner in the HBO booth was more qualified to determine that, since Steward trains the formidable heavyweight king from England. While many boxing insiders feel Johnson would be without a prayer in a possible Lewis matchup (if indeed Lewis is still the champion after his November date with David Tua), it is instead the bible-quoting WBA champion whom Johnson hopes to ultimately prey upon.

"I want Holyfield," Johnson said. "I never want to say anything bad about Holyfield because the man is my hero, but I'd love to get it on with him. His name is a lot more prestigious than anyone else's in the heavyweight division, and he's the guy I want."

Yet, Johnson knows that the positioning of the young heavyweight hopefuls has been a continual revolving door. One minute, you're pulling off a spectacular knockout victory on HBO; the next, your career is as frozen as the tundra in Maskaev's homeland. Rahman, Jefferson, and now Maskaev—they've all risen to the cusp of heavyweight hierarchy in thrilling fashion, only to watch their careers quickly collapse against the ropes, sometimes even through the ropes.

Johnson, too, knows that he's always just an eye blink away from a horizontal view on the ringside floor. But the man who brought down boxing's real-life Drago one recent October night is no longer locked inside a grueling, fictitious nightmare. Rather, the *Rocky* theatrics he performed in derailing Oleg Maskaev that night turned out to be pure documentary. ■

Ted Bodenrader is a freelance writer based in Boston, Massachusetts, and a regular contributor to this magazine.

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THE 12 MOST EXCITING ROUNDS IN BOXING HISTORY

The genesis for this special section was the Showtime documentary ***The 12 Greatest Rounds In Boxing****, which was hosted by Ferdie Pacheco, who also selected the rounds featured. Maybe you saw it.*

The problem with the program was that the majority of the rounds chosen didn't fit most fans' definition of a "great round." As RING *and* ***KO*** *columnist Jeff Ryan pointed out, "when people talk about a 'great round,' it's pretty much understood to be three minutes or less of non-stop action, shifting momentum, and wild exchanges." Many of Pacheco's picks—rounds one of Jack Dempsey-Jess Willard, Joe Louis-Max Schmeling II, and Muhammad Ali-Sonny Liston II for example—were one-sided. Others, such as the 13th rounds of Louis-Billy Conn I, Ray Robinson-Jake LaMotta VI, and Rocky Marciano-Jersey Joe Walcott I, were the final rounds of great fights, but not necessarily great in and of themselves.*

Perhaps our disagreement with Pacheco and Showtime is a matter of semantics. All 12 of their selections were highly significant rounds, rounds that changed the course of boxing history and the careers of the men involved. And that's why we've decided to use the adjective "exciting" instead of "great" to describe the rounds under discussion here. This way there can be no misunderstanding, and if a television network ever decides to base a program around THE RING*'s choices, you'll know exactly what you're getting before turning on the TV set.*

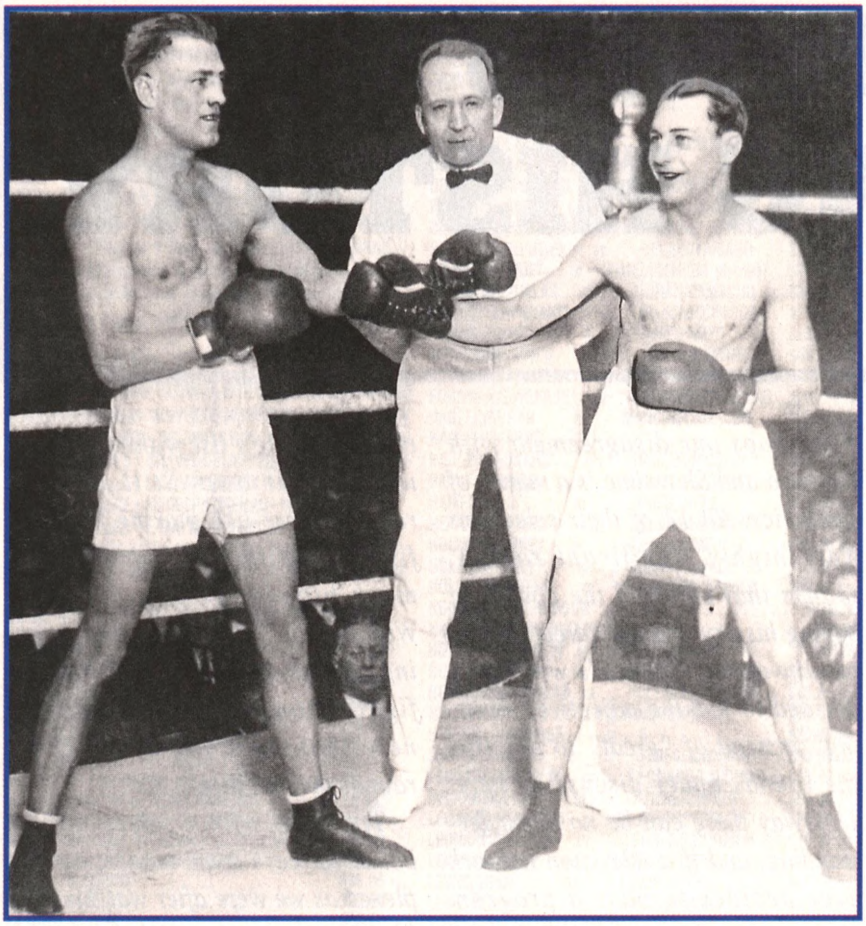
Establishing our criteria, which are the same as Ryan's, was the easy part. Whittling it down to just 12 rounds from the millions fought was another story altogether. In an effort to get as broad a range of opinions as possible, the editors enlisted the help of a number of writers and historians. Even then, it proved a herculean task.

But it wouldn't be fair to criticize Showtime's list without coming up with our own. Still, picking rounds is not like picking fights or fighters. With those, you have a much broader picture to go on. With rounds, you're frequently making judgments about a fraction of a fight—though it's interesting to note that there are six opening rounds on THE RING*'s list.*

THE RING's final selections are bound to leave some readers as perplexed as we were after watching the Showtime program, and there is no doubt that countless worthy rounds have been omitted. How could it be any other way? But that being said, we're sure that readers will agree that the rounds that made the final cut were all incredibly exciting. So even if you disagree with our selections, you're still about to relive 36 minutes of the most spine-tingling thrills ever created by two men in a boxing ring. Here then, listed in chronological, are the 12 most exciting rounds in boxing history.

BENNY LEONARD vs. RICHIE MITCHELL II

Round One - January 14, 1921



Mitchell and Leonard (with ref Haukop) are all smiles—but not for long

Mitchell was not supposed to have a chance against the dapper, slick lightweight champion Leonard, who had knocked out the Milwaukee-based challenger in a previous bout about a month before winning the lightweight championship from Freddie Welsh in 1917. Leonard was so sure that he would win the rematch easily that he bet a large hunk of his $40,000 purse on knocking out Mitchell in the first round—and it very nearly happened.

The fight served as a social event in New York City. With much of Manhattan's upper crust filling the stands expecting a spectacular boxing display from Leonard, the little champ was ready to deliver against the sacrificial target, Mitchell. But what the fans received instead was a wild opening round and very nearly a monumental upset.

As expected, Leonard controlled the opening seconds. He pelted Mitchell with a barrage of shots, causing the out-of-towner to fall virtually every time he was hit. The heavily pro-Leonard fans roared their approval, but promoter Tex Rickard had intended to bring something more refined than the one-sided beating the crowd was witnessing. Rickard was so aggravated about the display, he charged toward Mitchell's corner demanding a better effort.

Within moments, he received it—almost to a shocking conclusion.

While Mitchell was on the canvas for a third time, Leonard hovered nearby, taunting him to get up. Blinded by his arrogance, Leonard closed in to finish "Richie The Lionhearted," when suddenly Leonard's charge was halted by a left hook to the stomach, followed by a right to the chin that sent the champ crashing to the canvas.

The Madison Square Garden crowd was stunned, as was "The Great Benny." Referee Johnny Haukop counted over the surprised champ, "Six ... seven ... eight," as Leonard gingerly regained his feet. He was in trouble, and Billy Mitchell, Richie's brother and manager, implored his sibling to come forward and finish the dazed champion.

Mitchell, fatigued himself from the earlier pounding, stumbled forward, connecting with a left hook, then a punishing right. Instinctively, Leonard, bleeding from a cut on his face, covered up. He fired back a few light punches and gratefully welcomed the bell.

The two battled evenly over the next two rounds, before Leonard started to wear down Mitchell in the fourth. The great lightweight champ finally got to Mitchell in the sixth, a round similar to the first. Only this time, after being knocked down repeatedly, Mitchell had nothing left. Billy Mitchell threw in the towel, ending the fight.

Epilogue: Despite the severe pounding, Leonard went on to fight two more times the next month, and continued to reign as champion until announcing his retirement in 1925. Mitchell went downhill after the Leonard fight. A month later, he was knocked out by future lightweight champ Rocky Kansas.

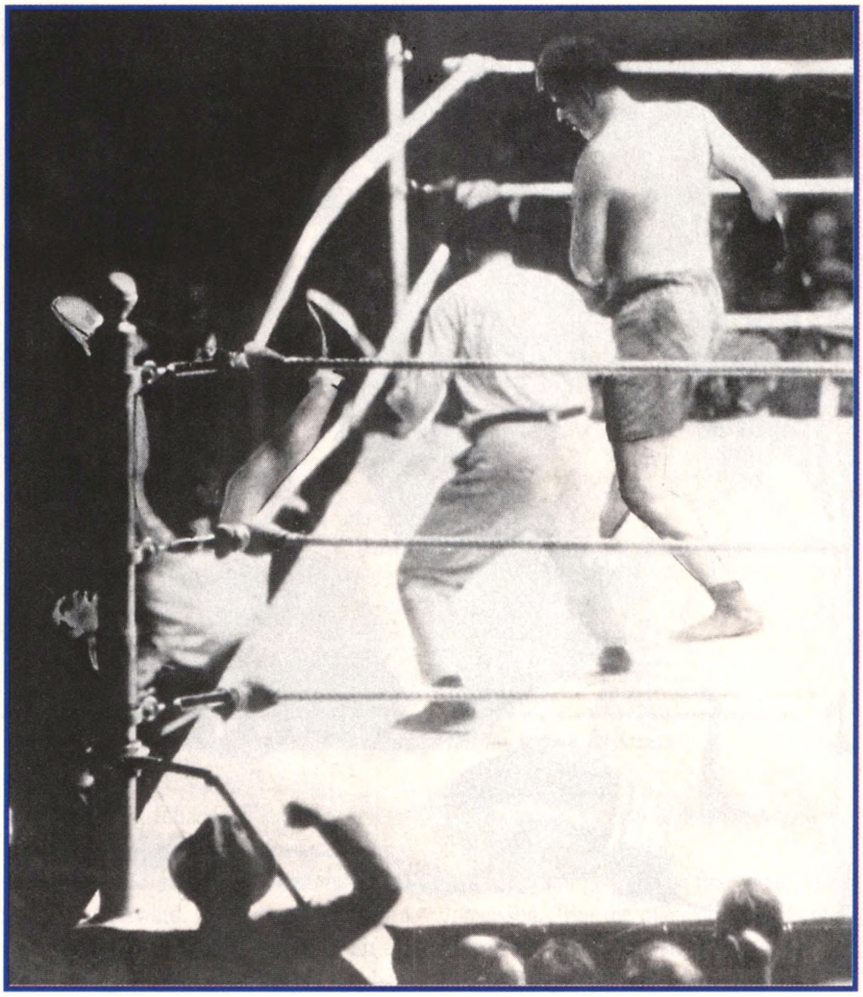
JACK DEMPSEY vs. LUIS FIRPO

Round One - September 14, 1923

As far as Dempsey was concerned, size never mattered in the ring. The six-foot-tall Dempsey weighed 187 pounds when he toppled 6'6", 245-pound Jess Willard to win the heavyweight championship in 1919, so his fight with 6'3", 216-pound Firpo at New York's Polo Grounds just provided "The Manassa Mauler" with another lummox to sweep away, right?

Not exactly. The giant Argentinian could punch, and when he landed the first hard shot of the fight seconds into the opening round, Dempsey found out quickly Luis Angel Firpo was no Jess Willard. In fact, if Firpo had been six inches farther away when he stunned Dempsey with that first shot, The Manassa Mauler would have fallen to the canvas, instead of falling into Firpo and grabbing him. The brief respite was enough for Dempsey to revive himself.

Working on instinct, Dempsey raged at Firpo, plowing punch after punch into the larger challenger. A left connected on Firpo's chin, sending him down in a heap 30 seconds into the round. Firpo rose uneasily at nine, and Dempsey attacked and dropped Firpo two more times. As Firpo rose from the third knockdown, Dempsey came forward to launch another salvo, but Firpo caught the champ with another right, causing Dempsey's knees to buckle, and his hands went forward to cushion his fall to the floor.



Firpo sends Dempsey into the reporters' arms

The champion quickly stood before the referee could begin a count, then lunged at Firpo, landing a right that dropped him for a fourth time. As Firpo regained his feet, Dempsey backed toward the ropes, looking for a cleaner angle at Firpo's chin. But Firpo crowded the champ, who tried desperately to escape his position. That's when Firpo landed another huge right that lifted Dempsey off the canvas and through the ropes, heels over head into the ringside seats.

Ringside reporters reacted out of fear for themselves, catching the hurtling Dempsey and, according to some reports, helping him back into the ring. When Dempsey re-entered the battle, he was still a dazed mess. But Firpo decided not to take any chances, feeling Dempsey was faking. The passive approach gave Dempsey a chance to attack again, and he drove Firpo back until he crumpled to the floor for a fifth time.

Once on his feet, Firpo spent the remaining few seconds of the titanic round going toe-to-toe with Dempsey. In three minutes, Firpo was knocked down five times (some subsequent reports said seven, but actual eyewitness accounts all maintain five is correct), Dempsey officially hit the floor twice, and the 85,000 watching were treated to the round of the first half-century.

Epilogue: After the Firpo fight, which Dempsey won by knockout in the second round, The Manassa Mauler would go on to lose two of his last three fights, sandwiching a pair of defeats to Gene Tunney around a win over Jack Sharkey. As for Firpo, this was his only shot at the title. He tried unsuccessfully to make several comebacks and lost his fortune on bad investments.

JAKE LaMOTTA vs. LAURENT DAUTHUILLE

Round Fifteen - September 13, 1950

LaMotta caps an incredible comeback

In terms of toe-to-toe, bell-to-bell, blink-and-you'll-miss-everything action, the 15th round of LaMotta-Dauthuille, as good as it was, doesn't quite rank at the top of this list. It was no Hagler-Hearns or Holmes-Norton. But in terms of drama and suspense, it was without peer. It was the kind of finish you only see in Hollywood—and we did, 30 years later, in the opening scene of *Raging Bull*—but this drama was not created in the mind of a screenwriter. For French underdog Dauthuille, who was mere seconds away from winning the world middleweight title, this ending was all too real.

For 14 rounds at the Olympia Stadium in Detroit, Dauthuille had been masterful, while champion LaMotta had been dreadful. He was weight-drained and sluggish, putting up the bare minimum effort to survive. All Dauthuille had to do was make it through the final three minutes, and the title was his.

The challenger began the round outboxing LaMotta as he had most of the previous 14, but then he began playing it a bit too safe, and his corner exhorted him to "Punch! Punch! Punch!" It was the worst advice Dauthuille ever got.

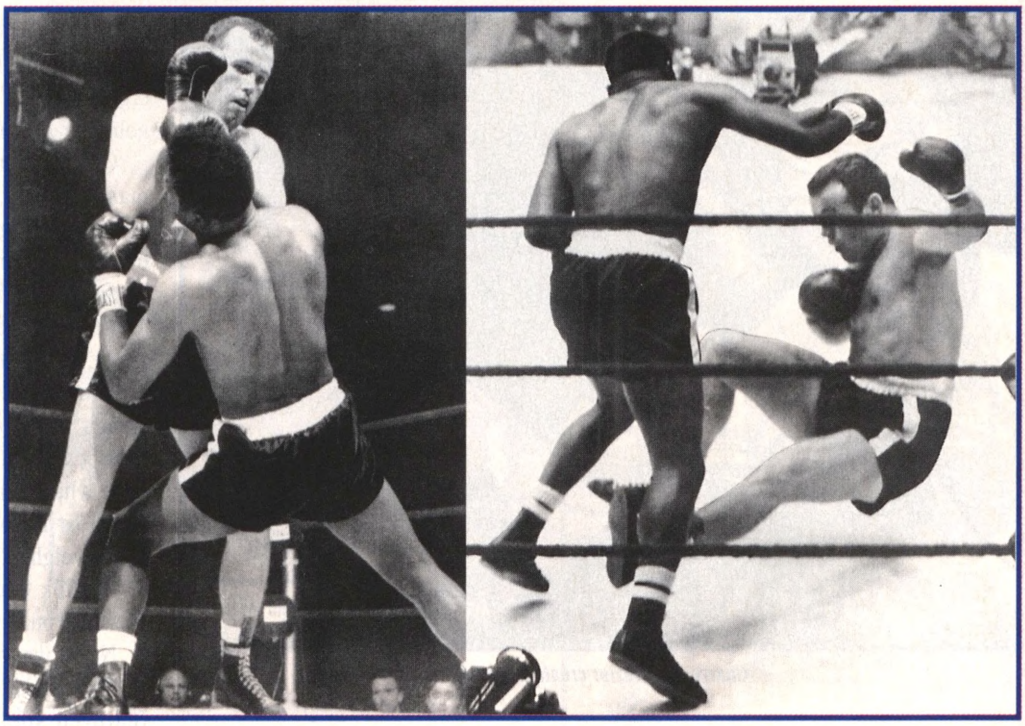
Dauthuille pressed the action and cornered LaMotta, scoring with a left and a right to the jaw. LaMotta fired back with a left to the chops, so Dauthuille responded in kind, then landed two more lefts and a right cross, adding to the impression that the fight was his. LaMotta continued to throw punches, but it was Dauthuille who was getting the job done, scoring with five straight lefts, then a right to the body, then a right to the jaw. There were just 30 seconds left. But in boxing, sometimes that's all the time it takes.

"Into those last 30 seconds was packed some of the most exciting action [Nat] Fleischer and I have watched in all the years we have been seeing fights," wrote THE RING's Daniel M. Daniel. With one punch—a savage left hook to the jaw—the tide was reversed, and the race was on. Dauthuille nearly spun around from the impact of the punch, and he could provide no resistance; all LaMotta was fighting against now was the clock. A powerful right cross made the Frenchman's knees sag, and he dropped his hands and moved along the ropes. An intense flurry of rights and lefts followed, and finally a right to the chin and a left to the body sent Dauthuille down, his lifeless torso propped up on the bottom rope. A 10-count later, the fight was over. And LaMotta even had 13 seconds to spare.

Epilogue: This would be LaMotta's last great win, as he lost the title to Ray Robinson in his next fight and quickly vanished from contention. Dauthuille never received another title shot, lost three fights in a row in '52, and retired at just 28 years of age.

FLOYD PATTERSON vs. INGEMAR JOHANSSON III

Round One - March 13, 1961



In a wild opener, Patterson was down twice before rallying to deck Johansson

By the time Patterson and Johansson climbed into the ring at Miami Beach's Convention Hall for their rubber match, a lot of fans were already sick of both fighters. Everybody, with the exception of Patterson's manager, Cus D'Amato, wanted Patterson to fight Sonny Liston, and the third Johansson bout was seen by most fans as nothing more than the latest excuse for avoiding Liston. And Johansson? Well, as far as the boxing public were concerned, Patterson had already exposed the Swedish playboy as nothing more than a one-hit wonder when he left him twitching on the canvas at the Polo Grounds in their second fight.

Ticket sales had been so sluggish in the days leading up to the fight, the promoter finally slashed prices a few hours before the first bell, which ultimately resulted in a near-capacity crowd of 15,532. But those who had scorned the fight had forgotten one very important thing: There are few formulas as prone to produce electrifying action as pitting a pair of hard-hitting, crystal-chinned heavyweights against each other.

Johansson, the pale, puffy-looking challenger with a target-like dimple on his chin, could do one thing at a world championship level, and that was punch with his right hand, and he wasted no time unfurling his famous "Hammer Of Thor." Approximately one minute into the fight, fans were treated to a familiar sight, as Patterson hit the canvas, compliments of, you guessed it, Johansson's right.

"I could never get started after he came out so fast and nailed me," Patterson told reporters afterward. "That first knockdown took it out of me. But I thought of all the hard training I'd done for the fight, and here it was hardly started, and I was on the floor. I thought, *I've got to get up. I've got to.*"

And get up he did, at the count of two, taking the balance of referee Bill Regan's eight-count on his feet. This created a minor controversy, as it was the first time that the mandatory eight-count had *not* been waived in a heavyweight title fight.

Johansson resumed his attack and soon drove another right into Patterson's chin. The stricken champion clutched wildly and vainly at Johansson's legs, seeking support, as he slid to the floor a second time. It was suddenly looking like we'd all be reading about "Ingo's Bingo" again the next day. But Patterson quickly regained his feet and took another eight-count.

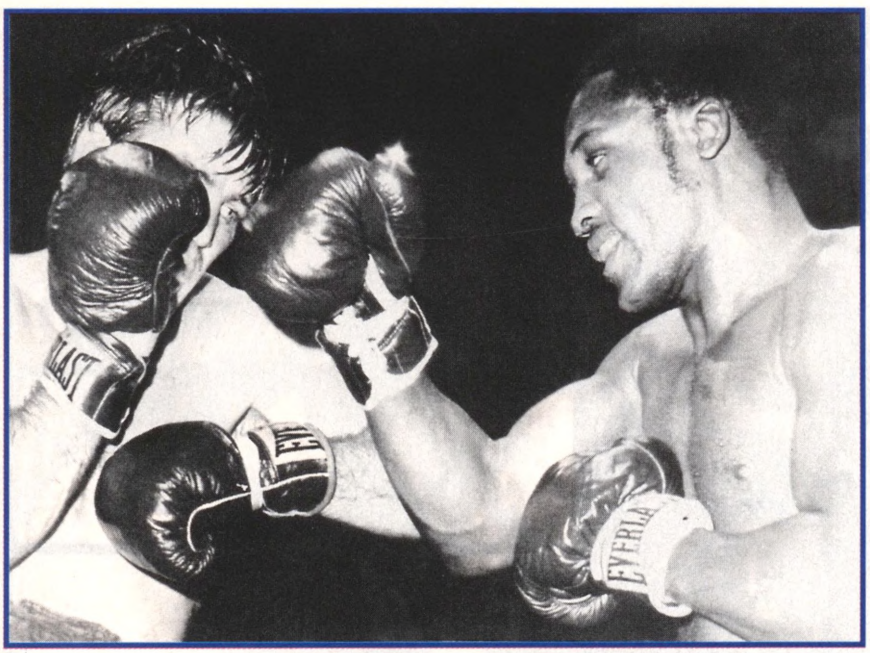
"I had him good in the first round," said Johansson. "But the mandatory eight-count helped him. He got up, and I had to wait."

Not long afterward, it was Johansson's turn to be aided by the eight-count, after Patterson connected with a left hook that sent the challenger sprawling to the floor for the third knockdown of the round. Ingo beat the count and lasted the final few seconds of what had surprisingly turned out to be one of the most exciting rounds of all-time.

Epilogue: Patterson, obviously the better conditioned of the pair, went on to knock out an exhausted Johansson in the sixth round. How fitting it was that the debut of the mandatory eight-count in heavyweight title fights probably saved the champ who went on to set a division record, suffering 17 title fight knockdowns.

JOE FRAZIER vs. JERRY QUARRY

Round One - June 23, 1969



Quarry and Frazier create a classic

In the summer of '69, Frazier was a heavyweight version of Henry Armstrong, a 203-pound bundle of ferocity who had buzzsawed his way through 23 straight opponents en route to recognition as heavyweight champion by the then-prestigious New York State Athletic Commission. "Smokin' Joe" was growing into his role as the anti-Ali, a relentless pressure fighter with a wrecking ball of a left hook that was rapidly carving out a legend of its own.

Only a crazy man would have even considered slugging it out with Frazier, but that's exactly what Quarry tried to do in front of 16,570 delirious fans at Madison Square Garden. And for one glorious round, he actually managed to do the unthinkable—outslug one of the greatest sluggers in heavyweight history.

There has seldom been a more glorious fool than Quarry that night. He'd been stung by criticism that he'd failed to give 100 percent in a decision loss to Jimmy Ellis the previous year and was determined to prove his critics wrong, even though both his father, Jack, and his trainer, Ted Bentham, begged him to abandon his plan for a kamikaze attack. But they were wasting their breath, and by the time the happy-go-lucky Californian bounced into the Garden ring wearing a baby blue golf hat, he was ready to jump down the Devil's throat without a parachute.

There was no feeling-out, no maneuvering, just an extraordinary explosion of punches the moment the opening bell rang. For practically the entire three minutes, they stood toe-to-toe in each other's power zone and traded one hellacious powerpunch after another. The action was almost too furious for the human eye to follow, and you could hardly believe what you were seeing anyway. With the pro-Quarry crowd going bananas, the challenger matched Frazier shot for shot, then sent him into the ropes with a hard right. This couldn't be happening; nobody does that to Frazier!

Quarry, unloading punches with maniacal fury, followed with two lefts and another right before Frazier regained his bearings and fired back with bombs of his own. Still, Quarry refused to take a backward step, and he landed another right, a left hook, and an uppercut. Frazier scored with a good left, but Quarry came back with a pair of lefts to the body and a right to the head to punctuate what Larry Merchant called "one of the most furious rounds ever seen in a heavyweight fight."

"I took everything he threw," said Frazier, "but I wasn't going nowhere."

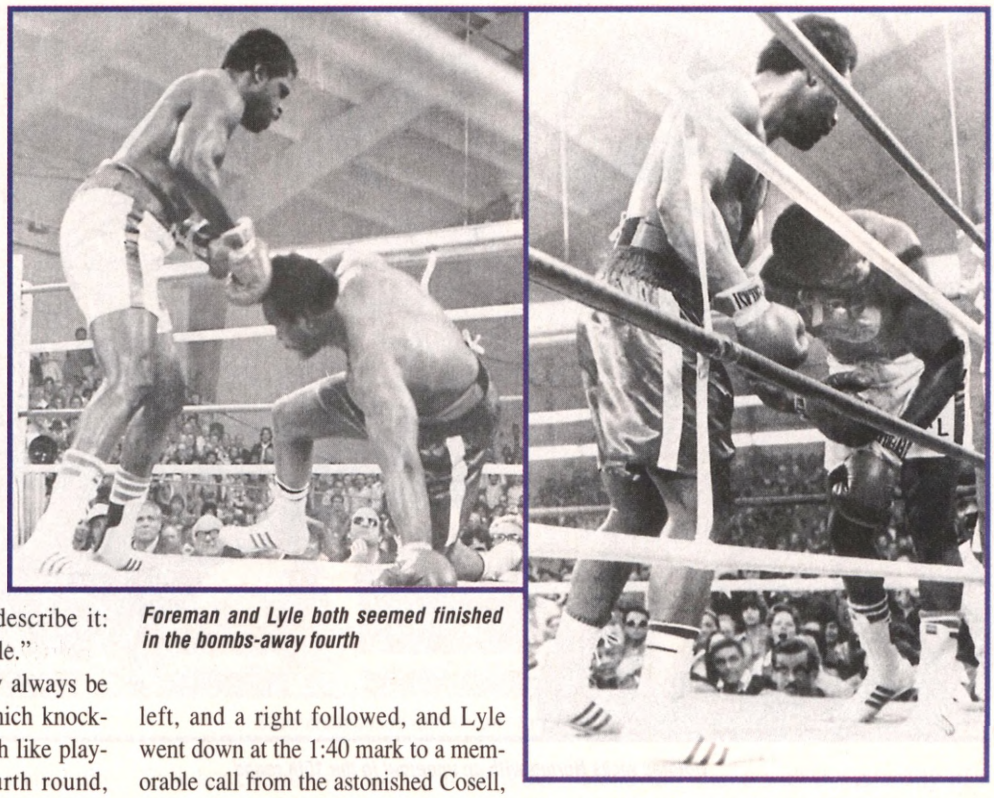
No he wasn't.

The second and the third rounds also featured spellbinding give-and-take action, but a wicked left hook sliced open a nasty cut beneath Quarry's right eye near the end of the third, and from that point on, Frazier began to take over. His more punishing blows gradually wore down Quarry, and by the seventh, the challenger was fighting on guts alone, reduced to throwing an occasional harmless hook as Frazier hammered his head and body with a merciless assault. Referee Arthur Mercante stopped the fight at the end of the round, wisely ignoring Quarry's desperate plea to continue.

Epilogue: When asked if he'd fight the same fight if he had it to do all over again, the badly busted up loser, a mass of bruises and butterfly stitches, managed a grin and said, "I think I'd have to box him." But when he got another crack at Frazier four years later, Quarry, still the magnificent fool, fought the same way and was stopped in five.

GEORGE FOREMAN vs. RON LYLE

Round Four - January 24, 1976



Foreman and Lyle both seemed finished in the bombs-away fourth

It had been almost a quarter-century since Foreman and Lyle had put on one of the most exhilarating displays of technically atrocious boxing ever, yet theirs was still the first fight that jumped to everyone's mind when compiling this feature. It was also the first fight to jump into people's minds on a winter night three years ago. After watching Naseem Hamed and Kevin Kelley exchange six knockdowns over four rounds, everyone from the TV broadcasters to the beat writers to the fans in the cheap seats were using the same line to describe it: "the featherweight Foreman-Lyle."

Foreman-Lyle will probably always be the benchmark for fights in which knockdowns are traded back and forth like playing cards, and it was the fourth round, specifically, that remains with everyone who was either at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas that afternoon or watching Howard Cosell and Ken Norton call the mayhem on ABC. Twenty seconds into the round, Lyle dropped in a booming overhand right to the jaw and followed up vigorously. A left knocked Big George halfway across the ring, and after a right and another left, Foreman, engaging in his first official bout since losing the heavyweight crown to Muhammad Ali, went down with just 40 seconds elapsed in the round. He was up almost immediately, and referee Charles Roth gave him the eight-count.

Foreman clinched a couple of times in an effort to restore his senses, but soon he and Lyle were trading bombs at ring center. They crashed home a pair of left hooks simultaneously, and then Foreman got in another hook that froze Lyle. A right, a left, and a right followed, and Lyle went down at the 1:40 mark to a memorable call from the astonished Cosell, who hadn't noticed that Lyle was hurt until he was on the ground: "Now George struck back! Now George fought back with a magnificent right! George fought back!"

The nasty Denver slugger struggled up, his breathing heavy, and Foreman drilled him with several uppercuts and backed him into the ropes. The ex-champ slapped Lyle with a series of pitty-pat jabs, then clubbed him with six unanswered left hooks. But as Foreman wound up for the telegraphed seventh hook, Lyle countered with his own hook, and an instant later, another counter left turned Foreman's legs into putty. Lyle unloaded: right cross, left hook, right uppercut, left hook, right uppercut, left hook. But Foreman, completely out of it, somehow scored with a hook of his own. Then, as the big man from Houston wound up for another left, Lyle scored with a perfect counter right, and down went Foreman again with two seconds left in the round.

Foreman crawled on just his knees and his noggin for a moment, then lifted his head to reveal a stain of blood on the mat, and somehow rose and returned to his corner. He would knock Lyle out a couple of minutes later in a fifth round that was almost as violent, but it was the knockdown-filled frenzy of the fourth that has been conjured up ever since whenever fighters are spending as much time on their face as on their feet.

Epilogue: Foreman scored four more knockouts before losing to Jimmy Young, retiring for 10 years, and embarking on the most incredible comeback in boxing history. Lyle continued on as a credible contender for several more years, but he never did anything to be remembered as anything more than Foreman's foil in one of the greatest pure brawls in boxing history.

LARRY HOLMES vs. KEN NORTON

Round Fifteen - June 9, 1978

Holmes rocks Norton with an uppercut in the 15th round

If there was ever anything resembling sudden-death overtime in boxing, this was it. Norton and Holmes slugged and battered each other through 14 rounds, with all three judges scoring the fight even going into the final three minutes, meaning whoever won the round won the fight and the WBC heavyweight title. When Holmes and Norton met at the center of the ring, they seemed to know it.

Seconds after the bell sounded to begin the round, Norton and Holmes stood toe-to-toe, slugging away at each other. Neither would give any ground. First it was Holmes, connecting with shots to Norton's head. Then it was Norton, hammering away at Holmes' body. Then it was Holmes again, firing away with his signature jab. Norton responded by digging shots to the body again, only to have Holmes respond, then Norton again, then Holmes.

So it went for three frenzied minutes. As the bell sounded to end the fight, both fighters, breathing heavily from their exhausting exchanges, were greeted with thunderous applause by the Caesars Palace crowd.

"What made it great, I suspect, was that we stood at center ring and, bone tired though we were, for three minutes we took our best shots," Holmes would say later in his autobiography, *Against The Odds*. "Norton landed early and hurt me, and had me in some trouble. At one point, he knocked my mouthpiece so high into the air that the infield fly rule could have been called. But somehow, I found the strength to revive, firing back at him."

Holmes convinced two of the three judges that he won, giving him the title and some much-needed respect. He used to spar with Muhammad Ali, and "The Greatest" once told his young friend that when "the other guy is fighting well and when you're staying with him, you almost always know you're in a good fight."

This wasn't just a good fight; this was a great fight. And when THE RING held its 75th Anniversary celebration in 1997, the 15th round was one of three nominated for recognition as the best in the history of the sport. Part of what made it so incredible was, as Holmes revealed after the fight, that he had stepped into the ring with a torn biceps muscle in the very arm that supplied his deadly jab. Holmes called his meeting with Norton "the best fight I was ever in."

Epilogue: After the fight, Holmes and his entourage followed through on a prefight promise, jumping into the casino pool, a fitting move because he had made such a big splash in the ring that night. This was just the start for him, and he went on to reign as the world's best heavyweight for over seven years. Norton won his next fight, a fourth-round knockout of Randy Stephens, but was then knocked out in one round by Earnie Shavers and quickly fell from contention.

MATTHEW SAAD MUHAMMAD vs. YAQUI LOPEZ II

Round Eight - July 13, 1980

Saad Muhammad rallies back from the brink of disaster

Even those who hadn't been privileged to witness the first bout between Saad Muhammad and Lopez knew the rematch would be a helluva fight. After all, virtually every fight Saad had was a pulse-pounding cliff-hanger. But not only did these two warriors top their first encounter, they produced both THE RING's Round of the Year *and* Fight of the Year.

Lopez had already failed in three previous bids to win the light heavyweight title, but thanks to his crowd-pleasing style and ability to beat all but the division's very best, he was still a viable challenger. Lopez claimed to have learned a lesson losing to Saad via 11th-round TKO four years earlier and vowed to fight a different fight this time.

"I didn't move against Saad the first time; I stayed and slugged," he said. "This time I'll box and move and be smart."

Although nobody would have ever mistaken Lopez for Billy Conn, he did a pretty good job of sticking to his fight plan for the first seven rounds. The pace was intense and each took turns being the aggressor, but after seven rounds, the challenger was ahead by scores of 68-66, and 68-65 (twice). In fact, Lopez' savvy boxing and accurate punching had swept the fifth, sixth, and seventh on two of the three official scorecards, and he seemed on the cusp of taking complete control.

Lopez was rocked early in the eighth by a left hook, but quickly shook it off and went on the offensive. He hurt Saad with a flush hook of his own, and when the WBC champ stumbled backward into the ropes, Lopez forgot all about his fight plan, ignored the yells from his corner to "draw back and box," and went for broke. For what must have seemed like an eternity to Saad, a prolonged volley, thrown by a man who had knocked out 33 of his 49 victims, smashed into his head and body. A lot of today's panicky refs would have stopped it, even though it was miracle man Saad Muhammad soaking up the blows.

But like he had so many times in the past, Saad somehow summoned the strength to endure the terrible punishment. He swayed, sagged, and staggered, but refused to fall. Then, as the round drew to a close, the champion came off the ropes with an incredible two-handed rally that hurt and almost floored Lopez. At the bell, the 1,300 fans at the Great Gorge Playboy Club Convention Center stood and roared with the intensity of a crowd 10 times as large.

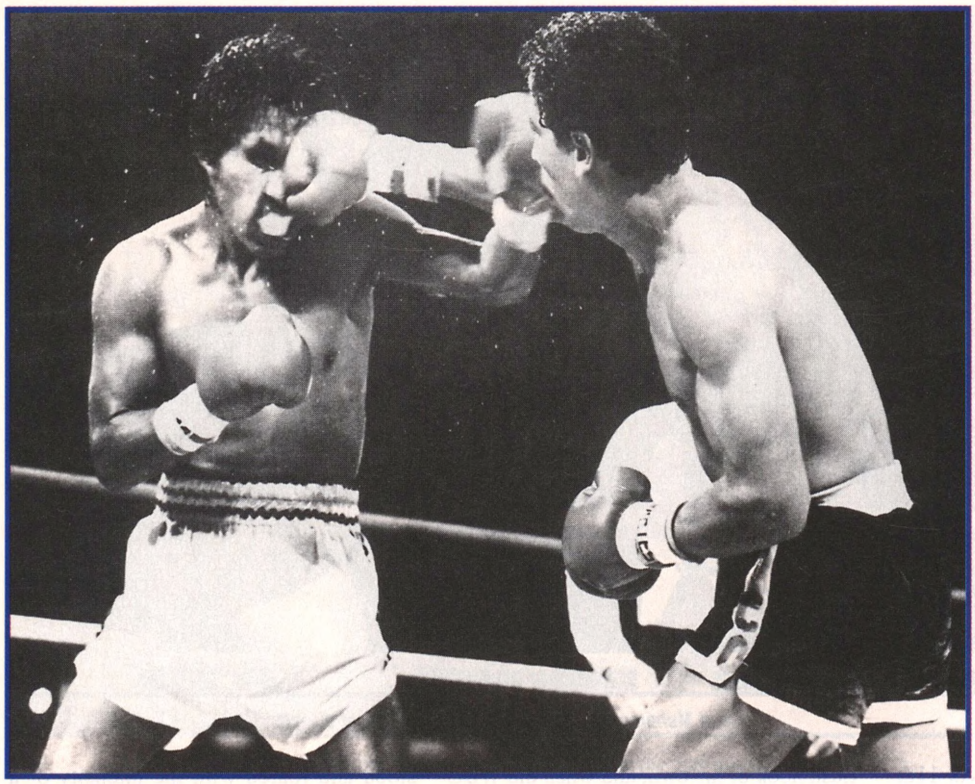
"I hit him good, but he didn't go down," said Lopez. "That's why he's champion. My handlers told me to box, but I have a hard head."

Unfortunately for Lopez, it wasn't hard enough to withstand the beating Saad administered in the 14th round, when the challenger was floored four times before referee Waldemar Schmidt stopped the fight at the 2:03 mark. Saad had performed perhaps his most amazing miracle.

Epilogue: Saad managed to hold on to the title for four more defenses before all the punishing wars caught up with him against Dwight Muhammad Qawi in December '81. Lopez fought future 175-pound champion Michael Spinks in his very next fight and was stopped in the seventh round.

WILFREDO GOMEZ vs. LUPE PINTOR

Round Three - December 3, 1982



Pintor and Gomez try to take each other's heads off

The nominal main event at the New Orleans Superdome was Thomas Hearns' 15-round decision over Wilfred Benitez to win WBC super welterweight title, but the fight that stole the show, the spectacle everybody went home buzzing about, was the breathtaking Gomez-Pintor thriller.

As is usually the case when one of Puerto Rico's finest fights a Mexican counterpart, expectations were high. Few, however, envisioned such a brutal encounter, an ordeal so exacting that an argument can be made that neither fighter was ever the same again.

Gomez, the reigning WBC super bantamweight champion, was desperate to redeem himself in the eyes of his countrymen, who had been sorely disappointed when he'd failed in a bid to lift the WBC featherweight title from Salvador Sanchez, another Mexican, the previous year. That Gomez had won six fights since, three of them title defenses, made little difference. National pride was at stake, and he'd never get another chance against Sanchez because the Mexican icon had been subsequently killed in a car crash. But Pintor was more than just a surrogate for a dead idol. He was the WBC bantam champion and a Mexican hero in his own right, a murderous puncher with eight title defenses to his credit. And he intensified the rivalry by openly questioning Gomez' heart.

Gomez took advantage of Pintor's propensity for getting off to a slow start and was finding the mark with his right hand with startling regularity by the end of the second round. It was already starting to look like a blowout.

Encouraged by his early success, Gomez inaugurated an all-out assault at the start of the third. He rushed out of his corner, punched Pintor into the ropes, and cut loose with a withering barrage. The Puerto Rican pummeled his rival with dozens of powershots, clearly gunning for a knockout, and for a while, it looked like he was going to get it.

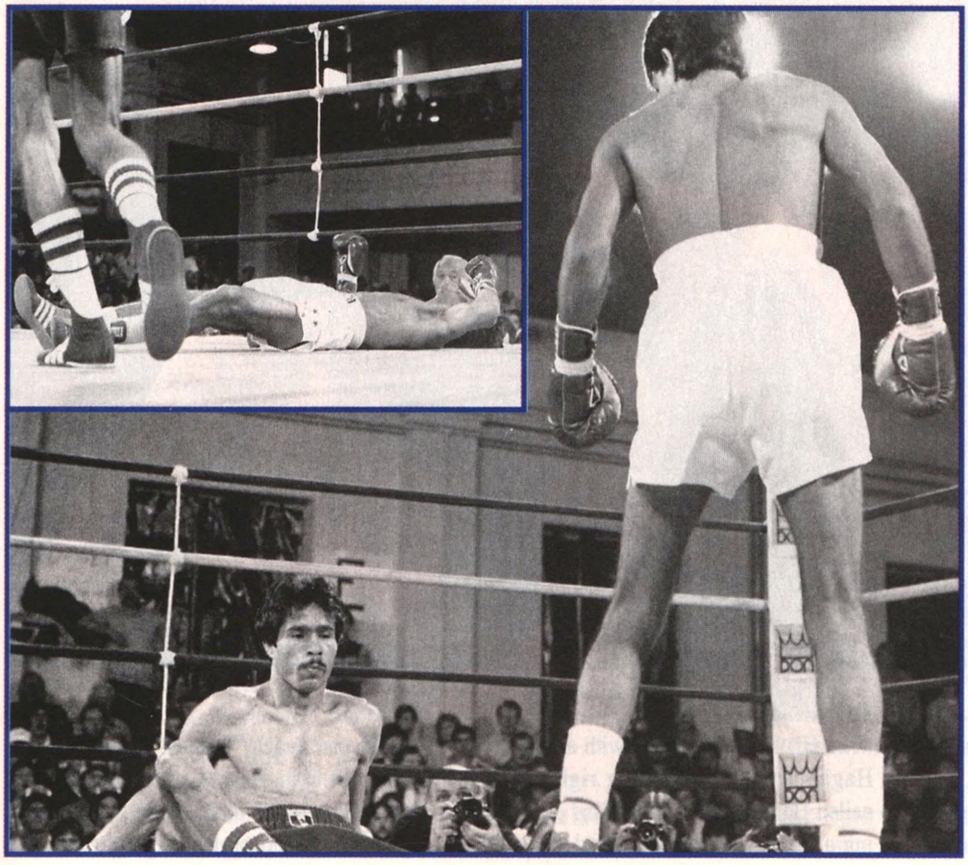
Pintor, seemingly glued to the ropes, bobbed and weaved away from some of the blows, but enough connected that ringsiders closest to the action were already anticipating that referee Arthur Mercante would stop the fight. But just when it looked as if Pintor would surely be overwhelmed, he came fighting off of the ropes with a dynamic counter-attack. Suddenly, prey had turned predator, and a left hook, a pair of jabs, and two more hooks crashed home, driving Gomez back to the center of the ring.

"This was Pintor's time to gain the respect of the champion," wrote Steve Farhood in *KO*. "But Gomez correctly figured this was also his time to gain the respect of the challenger. Gomez stood his ground and voluntarily punched back, and the war had begun: two cavemen clubbing each other without pause."

Epilogue: The battle raged on until the 14th round, when Gomez scored two knockdowns to force a halt at the 2:44 mark. It had been a fight packed with riveting action, but despite the two-way mayhem that followed, the third round proved impossible to top, and was selected as THE RING's Round of the Year.

JUAN "KID" MEZA vs. JAIME GARZA

Round One - November 3, 1984



Meza was decked early, but rallied to starch Garza (inset)

Amazing rounds don't always transpire in major fights held in front of enormous crowds in legendary arenas with superstars like Jack Dempsey or Jake LaMotta or Joe Frazier in the ring. Sometimes, they happen between junior featherweights whom nobody outside of hardcore fight circles has heard of on undercards of shows at tiny little rec centers. Such was the case when Meza took the WBC 122-pound title from Garza at the Midtown Neighborhood Center in Kingston, New York, in a blistering one-round war that was expected to be little more than a non-competitive co-feature bout.

Garza, with a record of 40-0 (38) and a wild, exciting style, seemed headed for stardom, despite his relative anonymity at the time. Mexican journeyman Meza, a mediocre 41-6 (32), had already had one title try and was pounded into defeat in six rounds by Wilfredo Gomez 2½ years earlier. There was no reason to be expect the result here to be much different.

The only real question was whether Garza had the firepower to knock Meza down en route to victory. In 47 previous fights, Meza had never been off his feet, not even against Gomez. But just 45 seconds into the bout with Garza, that streak ended courtesy of a left hook high on the head. Though Meza made it back up without much difficulty, the rest of the bout seemed a mere formality.

When the action resumed, Garza charged at the challenger and started unloading wildly. The champion from Los Angeles overpowered Meza and sent him into a corner, where the Mexican went down for a second time, though referee John LoBianco ruled it a slip. After his gloves were wiped off, a desperate Meza suddenly came alive offensively. Despite taking a one-sided beating for the first half of the round, Kid Meza had turned it around completely and was the one landing nearly all of the effective shots in the stormy exchanges.

With just a few seconds remaining in the round, Garza's disregard for defense cost him dearly. The champion was thinking knockout as he wound up with a left hook, but so was Meza, and his hook slammed home first, dropping Garza "as if he had been hit over the head with a baseball bat," according to THE RING'S account. Garza had been knocked down four times previously, but had always gotten up to win. This time, when he tried to get up, he fell right back down, then finally struggled to his feet at LoBianco's count of nine. But he was a dizzy mess, and LoBianco halted the bout at 2:54 of the round, at which point Garza turned and flopped to the canvas once more, his unbeaten record and world title gone. It was truly a startling conclusion to a round that lifted both Meza and Garza from virtual anonymity to a shared space in enduring ring lore.

Epilogue: Meza made one successful title defense, a TKO over Mike Ayala, before dropping the belt to Lupe Pintor and fading fast, fighting just five more times and losing three by stoppage. Garza never recovered from the shocking defeat to Meza, taking 15 months off afterward and going 8-5 against mediocre opposition before retiring for good in '95.

MARVIN HAGLER vs. TOMMY HEARNS

Round One - April 15, 1985

Bloody Hagler roars into Hearns

Many consider the first round of Hagler-Hearns the greatest round ever. Why shouldn't they? Rarely does a bout of such magnitude—this one was called simply and aptly "The Fight"—exceed expectations, but Hagler-Hearns did. And the first round was truly magical.

Hearns came into the bout as the WBC super welterweight champion, while Hagler was the undisputed middleweight champ. For Hagler, this fight would define his career, and he seemed to sense it. He wore the menacing bald head and goatee, but that sinister veneer belied a counterpuncher whom many felt lacked knockout power.

Right from the start, Hagler acted on his impulses and tried to prove wrong those who doubted his punching power. He turned the bout into an alley war, charging at Hearns, swallowing shot after shot as he neared his prey. Hearns fired the first powerblow, greeting Hagler with a jolting left hook. Hagler countered with a hook. "The Hit Man" answered with an uppercut. Hagler landed a crushing right. Hearns nailed Hagler with a right of his own, opening a cut on Hagler's forehead that spilled blood down the bridge of his nose.

From there, each Hearns punch splashed the red puddle forming on Hagler's face. Still, the intrepid Hagler kept marching forward, scarlet beads dotting his face and neck. He would take two, three shots, then blast Hearns with a head-snapping right or left. It went on seemingly interminably, both fighters standing flatfooted, tagging each other with exacting punches that would have drained any boxer even if spaced out over 12 rounds, much less crammed into three minutes.

Then finally, just before the bell sounded, Hagler pounded Hearns with a right that sent The Hit Man staggering back to his corner. The crowd at Ceasars Palace in Las Vegas quickly rose to their feet and burst into wild applause.

"He can punch," Hagler would later say of The Hit Man. Hearns, who would lose by knockout in round three, found out after the fight that he had broken his right hand in that memorable first round, which may have played a role in his defeat. Asked later why he opted to slug it out with Hagler instead of outboxing him, Hearns replied, "I had to. Marvin started running in and I had to protect myself, try to make Marvin respect me."

The round and the fight were selected as the best of the year by THE RING. Nothing else came close.

Epilogue: Hagler only had two more fights after the classic against Hearns, and neither were easy. He fought once in '86, scoring an 11th-round knockout of John "The Beast" Mugabi, then suffered a controversial 12-round decision defeat to Ray Leonard in '87. Hearns went on to win his next five fights, and would win three more world titles over the next six years.

RIDDICK BOWE vs. EVANDER HOLYFIELD

Round Ten - November 13, 1992

If there's one quality Holyfield possesses that stands out above all others as the key to his extraordinary success, it's gotta be heart. And if there was one three-minute span in his legendary career that best exemplifies his heart and his fighting spirit, it was the 10th round of his first battle with Bowe.

"The first nine rounds of Bowe-Holyfield featured more action between two quality heavyweights than any nine rounds since Larry Holmes-Ken Norton in 1978. Then came the 10th round, three minutes that compare favorably to any round in boxing history," wrote *KO Magazine* in the Round of the Year section of the 1992 Achievement Awards issue.

Bowe-Holyfield was a modern classic

Those three minutes began with a beautiful jab by Bowe, which reminded defending heavyweight champion Holyfield to move inside against the taller man, as he had done all night. But once there, "The Real Deal" was met with a devastating right uppercut from the challenger, and just 25 seconds into the round, Holyfield was reeling, appearing ready to go. Bowe pursued his man, and a booming left hook sent Holyfield toppling into the ropes, only those strands and his tremendous will keeping him upright. "Big Daddy" proceeded to bombard him with a two-fisted flurry, while Holyfield could do nothing more than cover up as he wobbled from one side of the ring to the other. Several uppercuts scored, then a left-right to the body, and finally a four-punch combination that left Holyfield relying again on the ropes to stay up. All told, Bowe threw 36 unanswered punches in a span of about 30 seconds.

Holyfield, who was losing the fight anyway, was done for. Or so it seemed. One minute into the round, the champion suddenly started bouncing, and broke Bowe's reign of one-sided terror with a lead right hand. The next minute or so of action was relatively slow—if it hadn't been, this would probably be considered the greatest round ever—but at the two-minute mark, the back-and-forth trading began with both men landing big left hooks. Holyfield scored with a right and forced his way in, and suddenly, with 15 seconds left in the round, Holyfield connected with a right that nearly knocked Bowe's head off his shoulders and made his legs wobble. The champion scored with a monumental left, then a right, and then a right uppercut at the bell, but neither man was done, and the two-way action continued for several seconds after the bell.

"The most amazing thing about the amazing 10th round was not that Holyfield came back after taking a beating, but that *Bowe* came back after *Holyfield* came back," wrote THE RING. And the most poignant thing about the amazing 10th round was that once referee Joe Cortez finally got the fighters to stop punching, they both reached out to respectfully tap the other on the stomach. In the round, 103 punches were thrown, a fair amount by heavyweight standards; of those, 69 landed, an incredible amount by any standards. But neither man went down. What heart.

Epilogue: Bowe won the fight by unanimous decision, but Holyfield would win the rematch, before being stopped in the rubber match. Bowe-Holyfield I was the start of the best trilogy since Ali-Frazier, and a high point in the esteemed career of Bowe as well as the Hall of Fame career of Holyfield. ■

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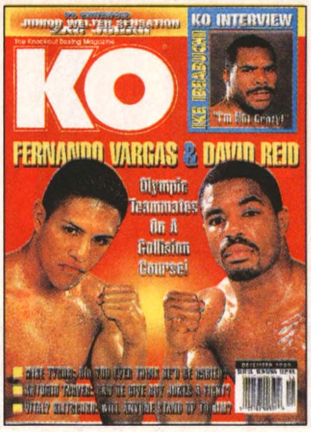

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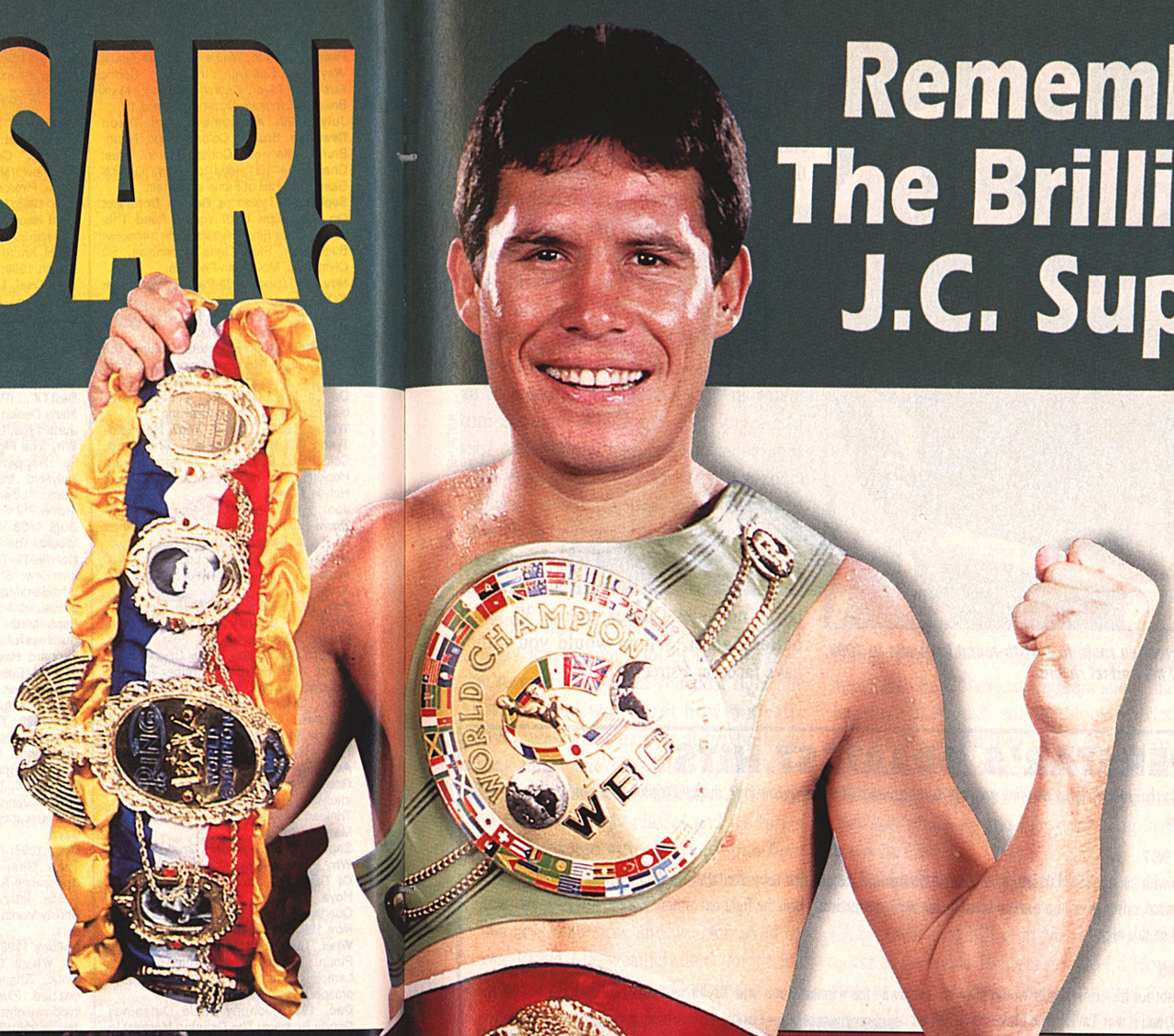
HAIL, CESAR!

Remembering The Brilliance Of J.C. Superstar



By William Dettloff

Things end badly for fighters. They always do. It doesn't matter the size of their legend or how many thousands of fans they've drawn to their sides during myriad ring walks. It doesn't matter how good their hook was when they were 25 or how easily they could walk through right hands. Things end badly. They ended badly for Jack Johnson and Jack Dempsey and Benny Leonard, and even for Joe Louis and Muhammad Ali, two of the greatest ever. It's been ending badly for 10 years for Roberto Duran. It's the same for everyone.

Back in July it ended badly for Julio Cesar Chavez when Kostya Tszyu played with him for a few rounds then sent him meekly into that dark place old fighters go just before they disappear. Never mind that Chavez probably will fight again, even though, with the memory of the beating so fresh in his mind, he said in the ring that it was the end. Whether or not he stays true to it is irrelevant. It is the end without doubt because he never will be a world-class fighter again or even a particularly good one. It's over.

The general melancholy that typically accompanies the departure of a legend probably is lost among all but the most loyal Chavez fans. He's done little to foster adoration over the last few years, revealing himself instead to be the prototypical sore loser. That's why when Tszyu was batting him all over the ring, few cried the way they did when Marciano was sending poor Louis through the ropes, or when Ali was getting pummeled by Trevor Berbick in the Bahamas.

It's hard to feel bad for a guy who got title shots handed to him when clearly he didn't deserve them, and who was the favorite son of the WBC and as a result got one break after another. It's hard to cry for a guy who, with the help of a few burly bodyguards, allegedly got drunk and beat up photographers and cabbies and other harmless civilian types almost as a matter of course when he couldn't beat up good fighters anymore. And he got away with it because in Mexico he's more popular than God. Even the usually mild mannered Bobby Czyz took some shots at Chavez after the Tszyu fight, revealing to Showtime viewers that although he respected Chavez as a fighter, on a personal level, he couldn't stand him.

It wouldn't be right, though, to remember only the negative things about Chavez, or just his recent in-the-ring failings. For starters, what do we care what great fighters do outside the ring? It's what they do in the ring that draws us to them. Sugar Ray Robinson was no saint outside the ropes. Neither was Jake LaMotta, or Marciano, or Sonny Liston. Don't even mention Mike Tyson. So when you remember Chavez, don't discount him because he was a bum everywhere but in the ring. Leave that to his family and the non-fighters he bullied and slapped around and to others in his life he probably screwed over.

Just as importantly, remember that the Chavez who lost to Tszyu and Willy Wise and who struggled against Miguel Angel Gonzalez and Tony Martin and who twice was routed by Oscar De La Hoya wasn't really Chavez. Anyone who remembers him, who honestly remembers him and hasn't allowed his boorish tendencies or his recent failures to cloud their recollection, knows that fighter wasn't "The Lion

Chavez fires his trademark hook to the body against Greg Haugen in a fight that drew a record 132,247 fans to Estadio Azteca in Mexico City. Chavez, who won by fifth-round knockout, was 83-0 and at the height of his popularity at the time.

The fight for which Chavez will probably be best remembered was his bloody, dramatic battle with Meldrick Taylor in 1990. Their war, which Chavez won by TKO with just two seconds remaining in the final round, is generally hailed as the best fight of the '90s.

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

"J.C. Superstar" cracks Terrence Alli with an uppercut en route to a sixth-round kayo win in 1993, Chavez' last triumph before Pernell Whitaker ruined his perfect record.

Of Culiacan." They know that that Chavez was cashing paychecks and paying back taxes—even God pays taxes in Mexico, Julio—and was really only in it because of the green.

Those who really remember Chavez remember what it was like from the mid-1980s through the early-'90s when he was, simply, the best fighter in the world. And before you say Pernell Whitaker was better all the while and proved it when he whipped Chavez and got robbed in their match in '93, remember that some of us like a guy who can pound someone into semi-consciousness over another who specializes almost solely in making guys miss. Even if the latter beats the former head-to-head, this is the fight game, and one's ability to put some hurt on an opponent goes a hell of a long way. Whitaker was a better boxer, no doubt. Chavez, even at 30, was a better fighter. Whom would you rather have faced in a streetfight?

J.C. SUPERSTAR'S GREATEST HITS

Chavez' sterling career was highlighted by several wins that solidified his standing not only as the greatest Mexican fighter ever, but as a legitimate legend and one of the best fighters of the last 50 years. These are our five favorites.

KO 11 Edwin Rosario, November 21, 1987

Forget that Chavez claimed the WBA lightweight title with his one-sided thrashing of Rosario. Remember instead that he walked through the best right hands the power-punching "Chapo" had to offer and never took a step backward, never gave him a second to breathe, and systematically beat the fight out of him. Rosario never was the same, and no fighter ever looked more invincible than Chavez did on this night.

KO 12 Meldrick Taylor, March 17, 1990

You can say that Richard Steele blew the call and if not for his error Taylor would have walked away the winner. But it was Taylor who was swallowing blood all the while, it was Taylor whose face was swollen and disfigured, and it was Taylor who broke down and hit the deck when Chavez landed the right in the 12th. It was Taylor who wasn't worth a damn in the ring ever again. And it was Chavez who won the Fight of the Decade.

W 12 Hector Camacho, September 12, 1992

Say what you will about where Camacho stood at this stage of his career, but there were more than a few observers who thought he could outspeed and outbox Chavez—maybe pretty easily. Instead, Chavez administered a brutal beating that began in the first and didn't let up for 12 painful rounds. It was the worst beating Camacho ever took, and that includes his loss to De La Hoya five years later. It finished him as a serious contender.

KO 10 Roger Mayweather, May 13, 1989

Some prefer Chavez' second-round blowout of Mayweather in 1985, but all that showed was that he could crack pretty good with the right, and Mayweather never had the best chin anyway. In the return, Mayweather was determined to avenge the loss, but Chavez walked through his best right hands and suffocated him with a savage body attack and relentless pressure. A proud fighter, Mayweather had never quit before. He did this night.

L 12 Frankie Randall, January 29, 1994

Why would we pick Chavez' first official loss as one of his best performances? Because he was undefeated, and guys with undefeated records a lot of the time crumble as soon as someone hits back. Not Chavez. This was an outstanding give-and-take war whose surprising result overshadowed the fierce action that led to it. Chavez fought his heart out even after Randall's right hand dropped him for the first time in his career.

—WD

Chavez dominates Rosario in a career-best performance

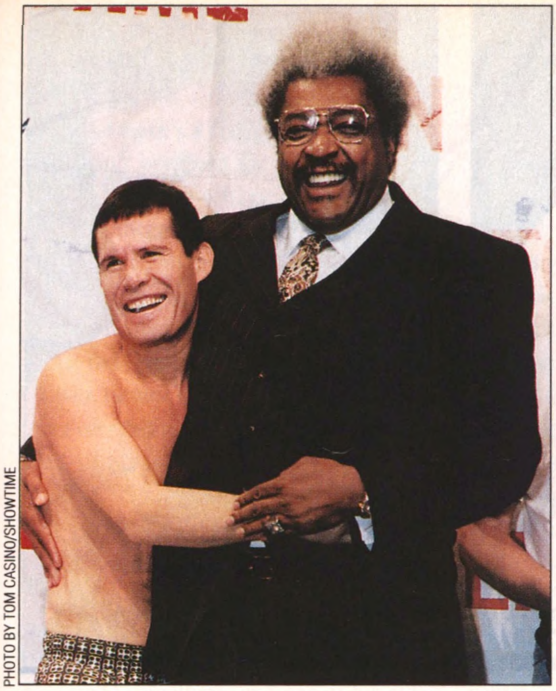


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

Chavez' buddy-buddy relationships with notorious boxing figures Don King (left) and WBC President Jose Sulaiman (above) did not exactly endear him to a lot of fight fans. Like many all-time greats, Chavez' connections seemed to help him get undeserved title shots and friendly decisions in the latter stages of his career.

Still, time, bad behavior, and a couple of ugly losses give a lot of us amnesia—you're only as good as your last fight and all that—and we forget how majestic Chavez was when he was at his best and taking apart one top-notch fighter after another. We forget how effortlessly he tore through three weight classes and we forget how he went into virtually every title fight as a favorite and came out unmarked and still undefeated.

So he's done now and we've moved on to our Floyd Mayweathers and our Shane Mosleys and our Diego Corraleses, and Chavez, because he's finally through and because he's a louse, is forgotten. He shouldn't be.

"I think he was one of the best fighters of his generation," said HBO Sports Vice President of Programming Kery Davis. HBO televised Chavez' fights whenever he was on the outs with Don King and wasn't bound to Showtime, which was a lot of the time for a while. (And see, you thought there was nothing to like about the guy.)

"Chavez had unique appeal," Davis said, "kind of like Duran did. It was the way he fought. He had great charisma in the ring and he was a warrior. It didn't even matter to most American fans that he couldn't speak English. Warriors transcend language."

Chavez' inability to speak English certainly didn't hurt him in Mexico. It probably helped him. There exists a certain pride among Mexican fighters and Mexican fight fans that rails against Americana, and the Queen's tongue is just another piece of apple pie. Real Mexican fighters speak the language of Mexico and they look Mexico and breathe it and they come from towns like Culiacan or Mexicali. They throw left hooks and they don't jab and move and they don't back up and they don't sing love songs on CDs.

De La Hoya could win 300 fights in a row and never come close to being the star Chavez was and still is in Mexico, because as far as Mexican fighters go, De La Hoya may as well be Irish. Doesn't matter that De La Hoya beat him twice. Chavez is and always will be Mexico's fighter.

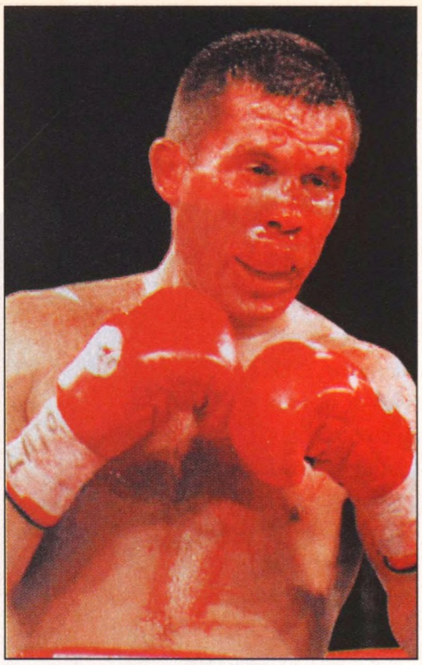
"He was legendary, so promoting him there was like promoting a national hero," said Bob Arum, whose Top Rank promotional outfit was where Chavez went when he and King were mired in one of their many spats. "In that sense it was easy. He captured the imagination of the entire country. You could talk to any Mexican whether they were a sports fan or not, never mind even a boxing fan, and they knew Julio Cesar Chavez."

So what that Chavez never did De La Hoya-like numbers in the States. He didn't have to. "His popularity in the United States was tremendous with Mexican-Americans—really the same as it was with Mexicans, just not as fervent," Arum said. "But the Anglos never could understand why he was such an icon; to them he was just another Mexican fighter."

Still, Chavez drew us close to him even though King was concentrating on Tyson and burying the world's best fighter on his undercards. Who wasn't watching when Chavez, already a hair past his prime, stopped Meldrick Taylor in the best fight of the '90s? Who didn't watch the overdue rematch, or the Whitaker fight? And remember, the largest paid attendance ever for a prize fight remains the 132,247 who showed up at the Estadio Azteca in Mexico City in February '93 to watch Chavez torture and dismantle Greg Haugen in five one-sided rounds. De La Hoya never did that. Neither did Tyson or Sugar Ray Leonard or Ali.

The analogy has been made that boxing is to Mexico as baseball is to the United States. If that's the case, Chavez is Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle, Babe Ruth, and Hank Aaron combined. It's why years ago, when Chavez first started to slip, the Mexican fight community began looking for "the next Chavez." They didn't find him, of course. They didn't find him in Marco Antonio Barrera and they didn't find him in Miguel Angel Gonzalez, who, for the record, was not the crowd favorite when he and Chavez met not an hour from where Gonzalez grew up. They won't find him in Erik Morales either, even though they'll cheer for him all night long. They won't find him in Morales even if he wipes out the entire featherweight division, because Morales is not Chavez.

There's never been a Mexican fighter



The last few years were not glorious for Chavez. He suffered his first defeat after 14 years as a pro when Frankie Randall decisioned him in '94 (above), and he was left a gory mess in his '96 loss to Oscar De La Hoya (right). His career finally ended with a one-sided beating against Kostya Tszyu.

more worshipped than Chavez, and that includes legends Ruben Olivares, Carlos Zarate, Salvador Sanchez, and Pipino Cuevas. Maybe it was the 86 straight wins that elevated Chavez past all the other greats. Maybe it was that he destroyed Puerto Rican heroes like Edwin Rosario and Hector Camacho. Maybe it was because Roger Mayweather was busting up every Mexican prospect they put in front of him until Chavez avenged the losses for all of them, beating Mayweather not once, but twice.

It probably was all those things, but it was the style, too. The way from first bell to last Chavez came forward, fearlessly, slipping the punches he wanted to slip and gleefully taking those he chose to take because he knew he could. The way he banged those hooks to the body and then came upstairs, the fluidity of his combinations, breathtaking to anyone who knows this business and who knows how many fighters try to do it just like he did and never come close. The way his skin never tore or broke open around the eyes no matter how trying the contest, at least until '93 or '94 when it seemed every outing was guaranteed to draw blood. Chavez wasn't the quintessential Mexican brawler, because he was too good and didn't have to be, but he had what all the greats had, plus he didn't share their weaknesses.

It must also have been the staying power and the consistency Chavez had that drew Mexico and the rest of us to him more than the others. Olivares was a brilliant, powerpunching little champion, but was flawed and somewhat inconsistent. Zarate was dominant, but he quit in disgust after getting shafted against Lupe Pintor, and when he finally got over it and came back, he wasn't the same guy. Sanchez was taken in his prime and really was too much of a Fancy Dan anyway, at least for the Mexican fans, and Cuevas' reign, as destructive as it was, lasted just four years. Chavez was a champion for the better part of 12 years in three separate weight classes.

Perhaps the truest barometer of one's standing in the game is the reverence other fighters hold for him even when they know they may face him someday. De La Hoya has always maintained that Chavez was his idol when he was a kid, even as he treated Chavez more disdainfully than he did any other opponent when they finally met. Fernando Vargas, on seeing his picture on the cover of *KO*, THE RING's sister maga-

WHAT A HALL OF FAME RESUME LOOKS LIKE

- Record: 103-5-2 (86) (every loss or draw came after the age of 30)
- WBC super featherweight champion 1984-'87
- WBA lightweight champion 1987-'89
- WBC lightweight champion 1988-'89
- WBC super lightweight champion 1989-'94, 94-'96
- IBF junior welterweight champion 1990-'91
- Total successful title defenses: 27
- Record in title fights: 31-4-2 (21)
- Holds records for longest uninterrupted title reign in 140-pound division (four years, eight months) and number of world title fights (37)
- Here's a staggering list of some of the better fighters Chavez beat: Mario Martinez (KO 8), Ruben Castillo (KO 6), Roger Mayweather (KO 2, KO 10), Rocky Lockridge (W 12), Juan LaPorte (W 12), Edwin Rosario (KO 11), Rafael Limon (KO 7), Jose Luis Ramirez (Tech. Win 11), Sammy Fuentes (KO 10), Meldrick Taylor (KO 12, KO 8), Lonnie Smith (W 12), Angel Hernandez (KO 5), Frankie Mitchell (KO 4), Hector Camacho (W 12), Greg Haugen (KO 5), Terrence Alli (KO 6), Frankie Randall (Tech. Win 8), Tony Lopez (KO 10), Joey Gamache (KO 8).

A 24-year-old Chavez shows off his first world title belt

zine, was moved to recall that as a young boxer he was inspired by seeing Chavez on the cover of the same publication. Do not think that there's a fighter in Mexico today who hasn't practiced the double hook the way Chavez threw it, or who trains in a gym that doesn't have Chavez fight posters splattered all over the walls. He is what every Mexican fighter aspires to be.

The downside of all that hero-worship is that the beneficiary can become the lout Chavez turned out to be. "He was much more demanding than most because of his God-like stature in Mexico," Arum recalled. "So wherever he went and whoever he was dealing with, he expected to be the treated like that. You had to keep meeting his needs and demands. He was spoiled. It was always more money, more rooms, more this, more that. He would say he wanted something, and one of his aides would be on me immediately. And sometimes Julio wouldn't even remember the next morning what he'd asked me for."

Of course, Chavez wasn't the first great fighter to make life hell for a promoter. Fighters who attain greatness usually see it as their right. But does Chavez qualify? There are those who will argue that he wasn't great at all, that Jose Sulaiman and King manufactured his greatness. And if you lean toward that way of thinking, you can make a case, albeit a flimsy one.

You can start with the Taylor fight, when Richard Steele stopped it with two seconds left with Chavez behind on the cards. You can use the second Frankie Randall fight, when Chavez regained the WBC super lightweight title with a technical decision that featured highly questionable scoring, or the draw against Gonzalez, which many thought Chavez lost. And of course, there's the gift draw he got against Whitaker. Perhaps the greatest example was Sulaiman's decision to make Chavez the mandatory challenger to Tszyu even though he had just been beaten silly by Wise.

Does any of this detract from what Chavez accomplished? Absolutely not. How many gift decisions did Ali get in his career, particularly toward the end? Two? Three? How about Louis? Does anyone doubt their greatness? How about Sugar Ray Leonard? Or Evander Holyfield? The great ones get breaks, sometimes more than they should. They all do. Call it a reward for achieving greatness, and you don't have to like it, but that's the way it works.

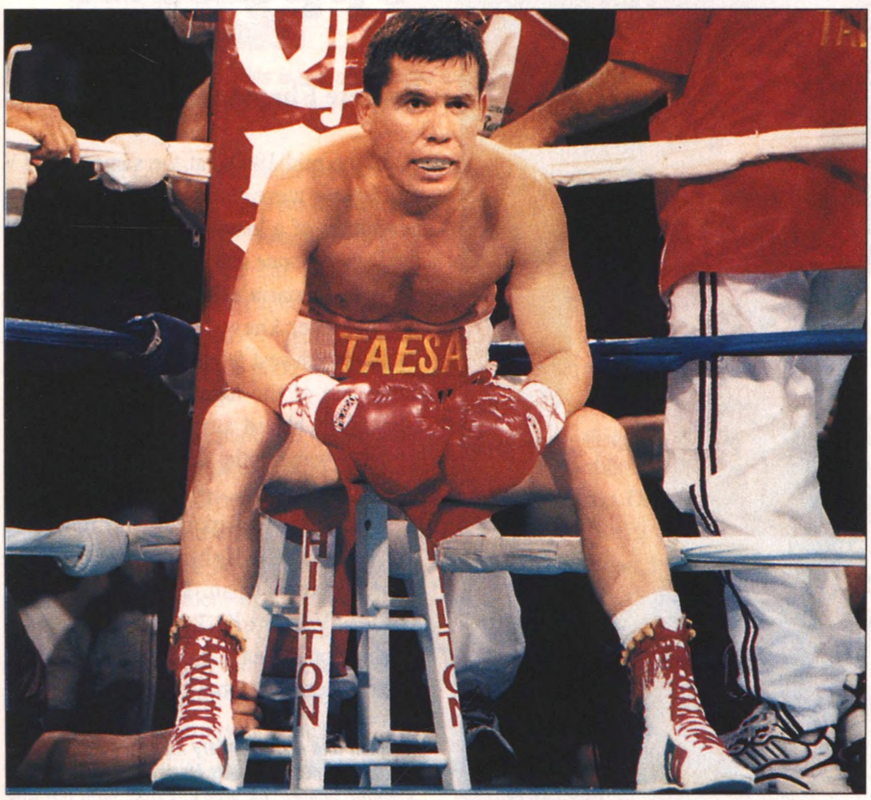
What matters is what a fighter accomplished from beginning to end, not what helpful nudges he may have received along the way. Greatness is not borne of preferential treatment or payoffs. Those things work only in the short-term, and greatness is never short-term. It comes from consistent excellence administered over an extended period of time.

"Chavez was the pride of his country for a very, very long time, and you don't win as many fights as he did without being great," observed Davis. "He had a special will to win and was able to impose his will on his opponents. It wasn't so much his talent, but his will that made him great."

Ironically, it was his will that many questioned when Chavez quit on his stool in his second match with De La Hoya. Was this any way for a proud Mexican warrior to go out? Sure it was. Consider: Chavez was 37 years old—at least seven years past his prime—and no more a welterweight than Eric Morel is. If he was going to be in any kind of shape at all, he'd have to be closer to the junior welterweight limit, which he was. De La Hoya was 25, in the prime of his life, and after making 147 the day before, came in closer to junior middle. And still Chavez stood right with him for a few rounds, got in his licks, then said to hell with it when De La Hoya busted his lip wide open. This after an 18-year career and more than 100 fights.

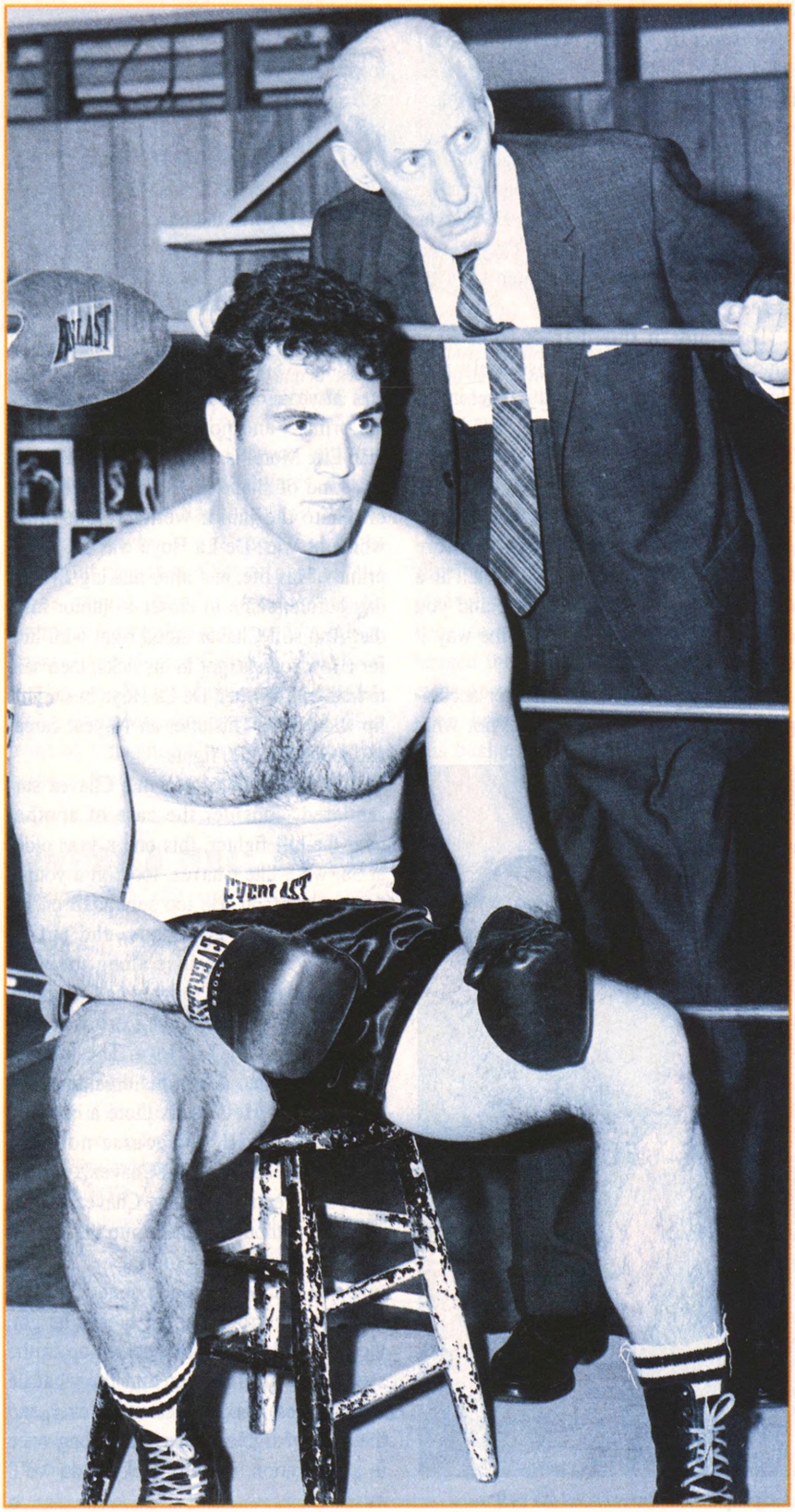
If it still troubles you that Chavez surrendered, consider the case of another over-the-hill fighter, this one a year older at 38, who, like Chavez, took on a young, prime champion. He too submitted on his stool, but after 11 rounds, and put up absolutely no resistance along the way. And this legend had roughly half the number of fights that Chavez did when he acquiesced to De La Hoya. The fighter? None other than Ali in his dreadful 1980 loss to Larry Holmes. Is there a question about Ali's will? Of course not. Nor should there be one about Chavez'.

A few years from now, Chavez will be inducted without argument into the Hall of Fame. It's where he should be. By that time, we'll have forgotten about the little things—the arrogance, the breaks he got, the cabbies he may have beaten up in the street. We'll remember him for what he was: the best Mexican champion ever, and the kind of fighter that comes along once in a generation, if we're lucky. And we'll miss him. ■



Classic Chavez: The three-division former champion eagerly awaits the sound of the bell.

BOONE KIRKMAN



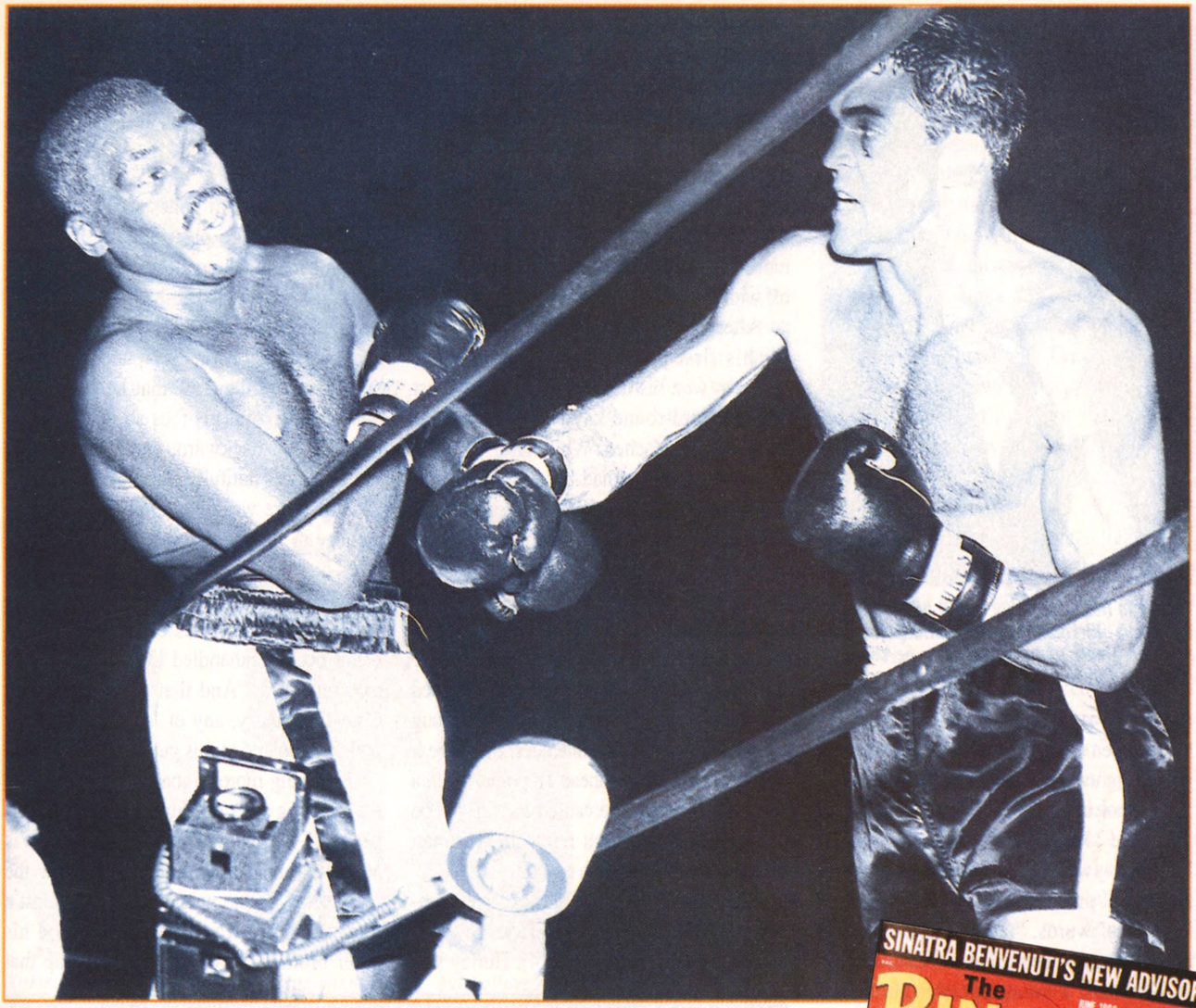
He Fought Foreman, Norton, And Lyle ... But His Manager Was His Toughest Opponent

By Pete Ehrmann

In the mid-1960s, at the same time TV audiences were hooked on the weekly adventures of a long-ago hero celebrated in the *Daniel Boone* series' theme song as "the rippin'est, roarin'est, fightin'est man the frontier ever knew," boxing fans in the Pacific Northwest felt the same way about a namesake of the legendary frontiersman whose fists blazed a trial that led, if not to the heavyweight title, at least to the cover of THE RING.

Daniel Boone Kirkman isn't related to the old Indian-fighting, bear-killing Kentucky woodsman. But growing up as Daniel Victor Kirkman in Renton, Washington, about 12 miles out of Seattle, he knew enough about him to not mind

Kirkman and his legendary manager Jack Hurley. Although Kirkman credits Hurley with making him a better fighter, he was unhappy with the way Hurley handled his career and finances.



One of Kirkman's biggest wins was a sixth-round knockout of former contender Doug Jones, who had stopped the Seattle heavyweight prospect on cuts in their first fight.

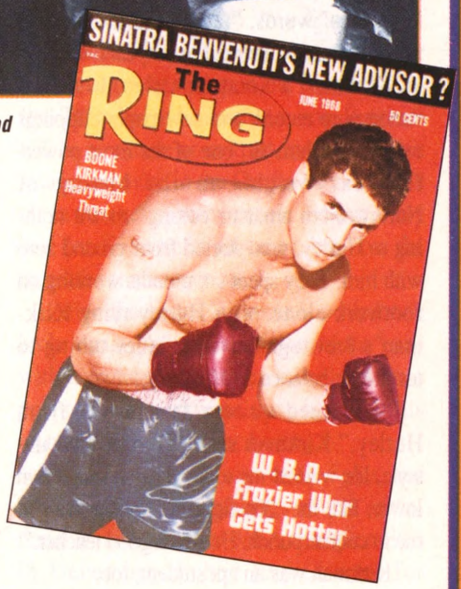
when his dad called him Daniel Boone on a hunting trip. It stuck, and before long everybody was calling him Boone. It was a rugged name befitting the kid who decided during one of the Floyd Patterson-Ingemar Johansson fights that heavyweight champion of the world would be a good job to have when he got older.

When he was 14, Kirkman was taking the bus into Seattle after school to work out at the Cherry Street Gym with veteran light heavyweight contender Eddie Cotton. The Triple Crown of Pac-NW amateur boxing consisted of the Golden Gloves tournaments in Seattle, Tacoma, and Portland, Oregon, and Kirkman won all three as a heavyweight in 1964. In an inner-city meet in San Francisco, he impressed venerable *San Francisco Examiner* fight reporter Eddie Muller, who wrote that, "to say [Kirkman] resembled Jack Dempsey in style is not an exaggeration. Kirkman, with limited experience, defeated John Andrews, a capable Army champ, via decision. Kirkman had a Dempsey weave and knew how to punch with either hand when necessary."

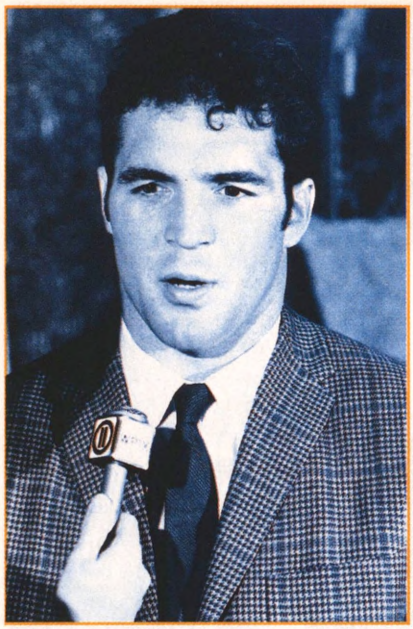
The next year, while Los Angeles puncher Jerry Quarry was knocking out everybody he met in the National Golden Gloves tournament in Kansas City, Kirkman did the same in the National Amateur Athletic tournament in Toledo, Ohio.

"I wanted to fight Quarry right after that," said Kirkman, now 55 and still living in Renton, "but he turned pro right away."

It would be another year before Kirkman started boxing for pay, because he was busy being re-programmed for it by the man writer W.C. Heinz called "the last of the great old-time fight managers," and the one whom Heinz patterned the character Doc Carroll after in his classic 1958 boxing novel, *The Professional*. By then Jack Hurley was old ("Sixty-nine going on 97," he said), sick and crankier than ever. But he was still an undisputed genius when it came to teaching and developing fighters, which



While Kirkman never got to fight for the heavyweight championship, at least he had the satisfaction of being featured on the cover of the June 1968 issue of THE RING.



Thanks to Hurley's ability to sell his fighters to the media, Kirkman got a big buildup and was afforded plenty of coverage when he came to New York City to fight George Foreman.

he had been doing since the 1920s, when he guided lightweight contender Billy Petrolle to a fortune in the ring.

In the '50s, Hurley took over ranked light heavyweight Harry "Kid" Matthews after 70 professional fights and, in Matthews' words, "taught me more in 10 minutes than I'd learned in 10 years."

Kirkman's amateur titles, his 27-6 simon-pure record, and newspaper clippings referring to him as "one of the most powerful heavyweights in the history of Northwestern amateur boxing" meant nothing to Hurley, who started from ground zero with him. They spent six months working on footwork alone, with Hurley tying Kirkman's feet together with inner tubing to teach him balance and leverage.

"I learned quite a few moves from Hurley," Kirkman said. "He changed my style. He wanted me to keep my hands down lower, like the '30s fighters. And he wanted me to counterpunch. He was a good teacher."

Kirkman was an apt student, too.

"Wait'll you see this Kirkman," Hurley told Heinz when the writer came to Seattle to do a piece about the manager and his heavyweight for the *Saturday Evening Post*. "Wait'll you see the way he makes those moves. Have you ever heard me say that another fighter of mine reminded me of Petrolle? Well, this kid does, and that's my highest compliment."

"You can tell a Hurley fighter from the others as easily as an art expert can tell a Rembrandt from something by Harry Grunt," wrote Heinz. "Ever since Jack worked it out with Petrolle, those Hurley fighters have come out with that shuffle step, the hands low and in punching position, and they invite you to lead so they can move off it, step in, and knock your block off with the counter."

After kayoing Lou Phillips in one round for his first pro win on April 1, 1966, Kirkman won his next 10 in a row, the last being a third-round kayo of veteran contender Eddie Machen. While clearly on the downslide, Machen had beaten Quarry and taken future champion Joe Frazier into the 10th round before getting stopped.

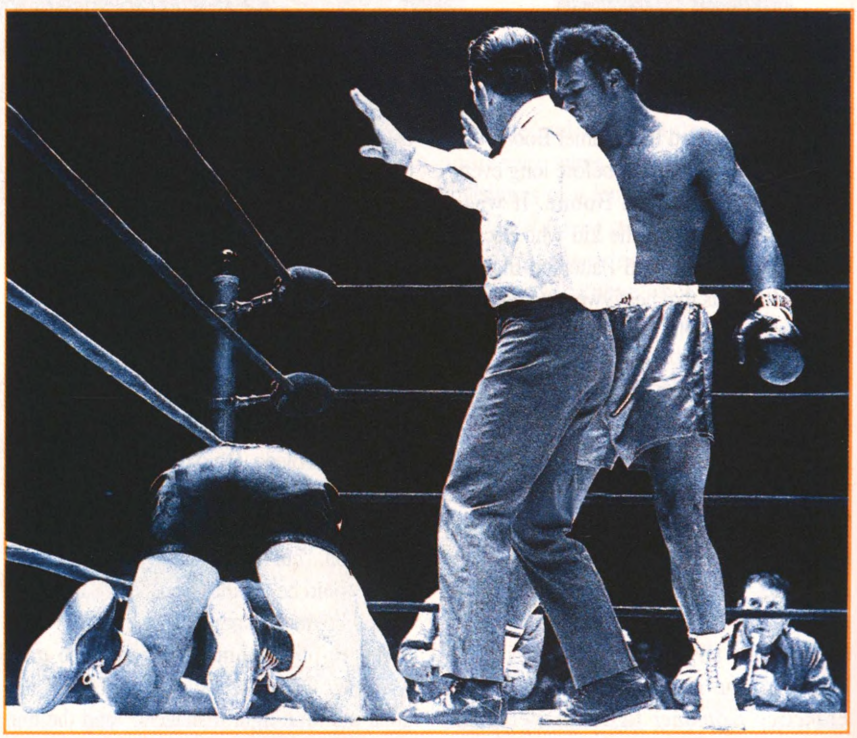
Seattle fans were excited about their legend-in-the-making. A crowd of 11,306 watched Kirkman starch Machen at the Seattle Coliseum, and there were 13,762 there when the local hero, whose big punch earned him the nickname "Boom Boom," met Doug Jones, another former contender, in his next outing. Kirkman was ahead on points when a cut under his right eye caused the fight to be awarded to Jones. In a rematch, Kirkman stopped Jones in the sixth round.

Kirkman knocked out his next five opponents, and when he made the June '68 cover of THE RING, he was 17-1 (14). Hurley was pushing for a fight in New York with WBA champion Jimmy Ellis or Frazier, then recognized as champion in New York and Pennsylvania. When it came to hyping his tigers, Hurley was the master of the straight-faced con.

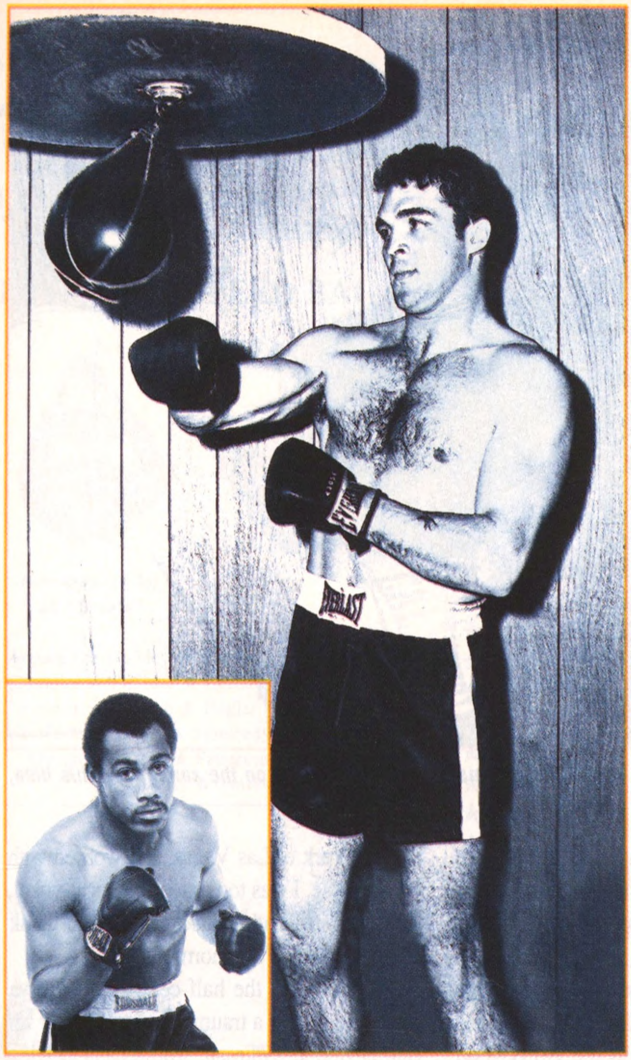
"I don't say I'm honest," he once said, "but I never take part in a big swindle, though I might take part in a small one. But my word is accepted in boxing, and that's good enough for me." Thus, when he told one reporter that Kirkman's punches were so "cruel and frightening" that he had taught the fighter to "hit his foes so that they fall forward, not backward, and fracture their skulls," it was dutifully chronicled.

Still, there was nothing phony about the damage to the face of veteran Bill Nielsen after he was topped by Kirkman in four rounds, including a nose busted by a punch in the first 10 seconds of the fight. "I've never been manhandled like that," Nielsen told reporters. "And that goes for George Chuvalo, Quarry, any of 'em. Quarry can't punch compared to this guy."

In boxing more so than even life in general, timing is everything, and what happened to Kirkman just as his buildup was achieving crescendo might have made the real Daniel Boone pound his head against a tree. When he was 10, Kirkman and his older brother, Steve, got into a scrap that



The Foreman fight turned out to be a disaster for Kirkman, who was knocked out in the second round. Kirkman reinjured his collarbone shortly afterward, and was out of action for almost two years.



Kirkman always worked hard on his conditioning, but believes he overtrained for his fight with Ken Norton. Norton (inset) is also the only opponent Kirkman disliked, basically because he thought the future WBC heavyweight champion's ego was too big.

ended when Boone sailed into a piano stool, breaking his right collarbone. During a late-'69 session with sparring partner Wes Craven, a punch to the same spot broke the bone again. After a layoff of several months, the collarbone snapped yet another time, and by the time Kirkman was ring-ready again, 18 months had elapsed since his last fight.

In the meantime, another big-punching newcomer had captured the public's attention. After winning a gold medal at the 1968 Olympics, George Foreman racked up 23 straight pro wins. With four quick comeback kayos under his belt, Kirkman signed to fight Foreman at Madison Square Garden on November 18, 1970.

Eighteen years earlier, Hurley had taken his last great hope, Matthews, to New York to battle Rocky Marciano for the right to fight Jersey Joe Walcott for the heavyweight title. Matthews was run over in the second round, and history repeated itself when Foreman did likewise to Kirkman in what the latter recalls as a "nightmare" for which he partly blames Hurley.

"I'll tell you exactly what happened," Kirkman said. "I felt like I was cheated on sparring partners. Hurley and I went to New York about a week before the fight. We were running in Central Park and going to the gym. I had one sparring partner. The people at Madison Square Garden told us, 'We got three good sparring partners. Want 'em?' I said yeah, but Hurley said, 'We don't need 'em.'

"Meanwhile, Foreman was sparring and getting sharp. I was in good physical shape for the fight, but not fighting shape. There was too long a span between fights and I didn't have good sparring in between. I probably should have had another fight to stay in shape. Hurley didn't give me enough work before I fought Foreman."

In the fight itself, things got off to a disorienting start for the Washingtonian when Foreman rushed across the ring at the bell and unabashedly pushed Kirkman to the canvas. Referee Arthur Mercante immediately penalized Foreman, but Kirkman, who was knocked down later in the round, never recovered.

"I don't know what the hell happened," said Kirkman. "I think they had it all planned what he was gonna do. I think they were a little leery of me. I was going to meet him in the middle of the ring, but he shoved me on my butt. Foreman had experience in the Garden, and it was my first time. It was difficult for a young kid. He might have beat me anyway, but I feel I could've had a better show."

Kirkman makes no excuses about what happened in the second: "He caught me with a left hook. He could punch."

The *New York Times'* Dean McGowen wrote that Foreman "destroyed the myth that was Boone Kirkman last night in 41 seconds of the second round."

"I felt horrible," Kirkman said. "Did you ever see in the movies when a guy gets knocked down and is just looking up at the lights? That's what I was doing."

Before he signed with Hurley, Kirkman had sought Matthews' advice about dealing with the crusty old manager. "He told me, 'Just do what he says, and you'll get along fine.' So I let Hurley be the sergeant and did what he said."

That ended with the Foreman fight.

Kirkman's disenchantment grew when he found out that Hurley—who'd taken his customary 50 percent of the $36,000 purse—had arranged to get a big percentage of the profits from closed-circuit telecast of the Foreman fight at numerous venues throughout the Pacific Northwest.

"They drew full houses in every place," claimed Kirkman. "He had a percentage of the gate, and all he gave me was $2,000."

It was a bitter dissolution of their partnership. In a formal statement published in THE RING, Hurley insisted "my handling of Kirkman's affairs was in no way responsible for his complete foldup in the Foreman contest. There had to be another reason. But there will be no excuse on my part, even though his strange behavior in the Garden ring crucified me in the eyes of many people. I did my very best for Kirkman at all times, but now the time has come to bow out."

After the fight, Kirkman's collarbone broke again. A surgeon reinforced the bone with a metal plate, and it was almost two years before Kirkman, now handling his own affairs, was back in the ring.

In '73, he won all nine of his fights, and broke back into the rankings after a sensational win over former WBA champion Ellis in December. It had looked over for Kirkman in the third round, when Ellis landed a left hook that sent him to the deck.

"I don't even remember going down," said Kirkman. "My head was like a tuning fork."

But he got up, and not only managed to survive the ex-champ's fusillade, but came back to win the round. When the split decision for Kirkman was announced, the

Kirkman (second from the left) faced Foreman again in 1975 when he was one of the five men Big George fought on the same day. This time, Kirkman went the distance, even though it was only a three-round exhibition.

10,072 fans at the Seattle Coliseum danced around chanting, "Boom! Boom! Boone!"

"I thought I was going to the top," Kirkman said, "until I went to Texas and got tuned out by Al Jones."

Jones was your basic journeyman who'd been fodder for many an up-and-coming heavyweight. But he'd embarrassed Quarry by putting him on the floor twice, and after Kirkman put him down twice in both the first and second rounds, Jones lowered the Boom Boom for the count with a wild overhand right.

Kirkman has no hard feelings toward Jones or Foreman, nor anybody else he fought except for the one who came next. And that had less to do with what happened in the ring between him and Ken Norton than the future WBC heavyweight champion's general demeanor.

"He thought he was so cool," Kirkman said. "I don't like a guy with a head as big as the world."

Kirkman was also nettled because Norton, who won in the eighth round, said his plan all along was to just bide his time until Kirkman ran out of gas.

"Believe it or not, he was scared when we fought. I was psyched up. I trained so hard, I overtrained. I kicked his butt for the first four rounds, but I left most of it in the gym. He hit me with a fair punch, but my brother hit me harder than that. I fell more from exhaustion than from the punch."

There was, however, one gratifying thing about the Norton fight.

"I broke his rib and they had to postpone that *Mandingo* show for six months," Kirkman said, referring to the Hollywood film starring Norton as a 19th century fighting slave/love machine.

Kirkman lost his third consecutive inside-the-distance bout in '74 when contender Ron Lyle stopped him on cuts. His final big encounter the following year doesn't appear on his record because technically it was only an exhibition.

On April 26, in his first ring appearance since losing to Muhammad Ali, Foreman boxed Kirkman and four other opponents in a weird extravaganza in Toronto. It was a circus televised on ABC's *Wild World Of Sports*, with Howard Cosell providing the apocalyptic commentary and Ali whipping up the crowd at Maple Leaf Gardens. Kirkman came away with a $10,000 payday and the satisfaction of being one of two Foreman opponents still on his feet after three rounds.

After winning four more bouts, Kirkman retired in 1978, finishing 36-6 (25).

"After so long, the politics just burns you out," he said. "What I should have done is pack my bags after Hurley and split and gone to New York or Las Vegas, and worked with good people. I was too much of a local-yokel, I guess. But I had a good career, and thank God I'm still halfway normal."

When he hit the half-century mark five years ago, it was a traumatic new frontier for Daniel Boone Kirkman, who recalls looking into the mirror then at "probably the hardest view I ever saw."

But there are worse ones. "I'm above ground," Kirkman said. "That's the main thing."

A truck driver for Boeing Aircraft for the last 24 years, and a grandfather, Kirkman is still close to his old fighting weight, thanks to bicycling, hiking, and skiing.

"I don't know how many rounds I could go," he said, "but I feel pretty good."

Still, times move on, and even rippin', roarin', and fightin' legends fade. "Nobody knows me anymore," Kirkman said. "But the people I work with, once in a while they mention something about the old days."

Kirkman gets his nostalgia fix at the annual picnic held in Oregon for ex-fighters in the Pacific Northwest, where last year Kirkman was honored for his career.

"We tease each other about who's got the flattest nose," he said. ■

Pete Ehrmann is a freelance writer based in West Allis, Wisconsin, and a regular contributor to this magazine.

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★ Christy Martin
★ "Sugar" Shane Mosley
★ Willie Pep
★ "Marvelous" Marvin Hagler
★ Ken Norton
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★ David Reid
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SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Mike Tyson KO 3 Andrew Golota
Wladimir Klitschko W 12 Chris Byrd
David Izon KO 3 Mike Sedillo
Derrick Jefferson KO 1 Marcus Johnson
Frans Botha KO 1 Tony LaRosa
James Toney KO 3 Courtney Butler
Danell Nicholson KO 2 Reynaldo Minus
Shannon Briggs KO 1 Eric Curry
Orlin Norris W 10 Brad Rone
Charles Shufford W 10 Lamon Brewster
Eliecer Castillo W 12 Wolfgramm
Brian Nielsen KO 1 Kevin Cook
Brian Nielsen KO 2 Andy Sample
Danny Williams KO 6 Mark Potter
Ross Puritty KO 4 Ronnie Smith
Greg Page KO 1 Mark Bradley
Colin Wilson KO 6 Justin Fortune
Albert Sosnowski KO 7 Everett Martin
Kali Meehan KO 1 Danny Buzza
Friday Ahunanya KO 5 Ivy Calvin
Tye Fields KO 1 Nick Flores
Harold Sconiers W 6 Ray Austin
Attila Levin KO 2 Chavez Francisco
Russell Chasteen W 6 Adam Flores

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Marcelo Dominguez W 10 George Arias
Dale Brown W 10 Sione Asipeli
Jorge Castro KO 7 Fabian Chancalay
Robert Norton KO 3 Tony Booth
Carlos Cruzat KO 5 Jose Luis Rivera
O'Neil Bell KO 5 Michael Rush

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

Gabriel Hernandez KO 2 Anthony Spain
Antwon Leach W 10 Vincent Moses
Fernando Zuniga W 8 Reggie Roberts
Thomas Ulrich W 8 Ali Forbes
Demetrius Jenkins Tech. Draw 1
Etianne Whitaker
Anthony Hanshaw KO 1 Demetrius Johnson

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Dana Rosenblatt W 12 Will McIntyre
Mads Larsen KO 1 Danny Phippen
Mads Larsen KO 1 Antoine Robinson
Paul Jones KO 1 Olivier Beard
Neil Linford W 10 Matthew Barney
Anthony Mundine W 8 Heath Stenton
Laila Ali W 6 Kendra Lenhart

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Raymond Joval W 12 Mpush Makambi
Ian McLeod W 12 Nico Toriri
Amadeo Pena KO 8 Xavier Moya
Ryan Rhodes W 6 Michael Alexander
Tokunbo Olajide KO 1 Brad Ekstam

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Francisco Castillejo KO 4 Javier Martinez
(Retains WBC Title)
Fathi Missaoui W 12 Andrew Murray
Nick Martinez W 10 Alfred Ankamah
Angel Hernandez KO 2 Cirilo Nino
Nader Hamdan KO 4 Rey Pelonia
Christophe Canclaux KO 2 Olivier Meunier
Maselino Masoe KO 2 Sam Hill

WELTERWEIGHTS

Shane Mosley KO 6 Antonio Diaz
(Retains WBC Title)
Thomas Damgaard W 12 Alessandro Duran
Danny Perez KO 2 Sam Garr
Pasquale Perna W 10 Alvaro Moreno
Harry Dhami W 12 Malcolm Melvin
Mark Riggs KO 4 Eric Jakubowski
Charles Baou KO 4 Bruce Corby
Larry Mosley W 4 Roger Flores

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Zab Judah KO 8 Hector Quiroz
(Retains IBF Title)
Hector Camacho Jr. W 10 Joe Hutchinson
Diobelys Hurtado KO 1 Fray Luis Sierra
Junior Witter KO 4 Steve Conway
Ricky Hatton W 12 Jon Thaxton
Jason Rowland W 12 Victor Baranov
Allan Vester W 12 Glenn McClarnon
Efren Hinojosa W 10 Ernie Zavala
Justin Rowsell Tech. Draw 2 Guillermo Mosquera
Daomai Sithkodom KO 3 Kokikchi Tanaka
Kenito Drake W 8 Bernard Harris

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Takanori Hatakeyama KO 10 Hiroyuki Sakamoto
(Retains WBA Title)
Floyd Mayweather KO 9 Emanuel Burton
(Non-Title Bout)
Colin Dunne W 12 Billy Schwer
Juan Lazcano KO 8 Dorin Spivey
Victoriano Sosa W 10 Harold Warren

Lamar Murphy W 10 Daniel Alicea
Freddy Neal KO 3 Julio Alvarez
Alex Trujillo W 10 Jose Luis Juarez
Tadashi Yuba Tech. Win 6 Junichi Ono
Mick O'Malley KO 8 Marvin Francisco
Yoni Vargas KO 4 Amador Vasquez

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

Robbie Peden W 12 Edgar Barcenas
Steve Dotse D 10 Bobby Tomasello
Sirimongkol Singwangcha KO 1 Dondan Corlas
Affif Djelti KO 6 Dean Pithie
Jorge Barrios W Disq. 5 Carlos Uribe
Ryuhei Sugita KO 6 Hiroshi Mizushima
Kazumori Fujita W 12 Kangil Cho
Takashi Koshimoto Tech. Win 9 Baby Lorona Jr.
Michael Gomez W 8 Awel Abdulai

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Juan Manuel Marquez KO 3 Reynante Jamili
Manuel Medina W 10 Daniel Rodriguez
Victor Polo W 12 Angel Vazquez
Istvan Kovacs KO 1 Augustin Lorenzo
Cassius Baloyi W 12 Steve Robinson
Juan Carlos Ramirez W 12 Jose Luis Tula
Luisito Espinosa KO 4 Ramon Aragon
Julio Pablo Chacon W 12 Justo Martinez
Hector Velazquez W 10 Ubaldo Hernandez
Powerful Honmo W 10 Eiichi Sugama
David Murillo W 10 Humberto Soto
Lewis Wood W 8 Natalio Ponce

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Manny Pacquiao KO 10 Nedal Hussein
Ricardo Barajas KO 6 Cuauhtemoc Gomez
Israel Vazquez KO 2 Eddie Saenz
Jesus Salud W 8 Jorge Monzon
Toshiaki Nishioka W 10 Gerardo Martinez

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Jorge Lacierva W 12 Sergio Perez
Johnny Bredahl W 8 Leonardo Gutierrez
Luigi Castiglione W 12 Jesper Jensen
Nicky Booth W 12 Tommy Waite
Akihiko Nago KO 2 Archie Villamor
Nobuaki Naka W 10 Shigeru Nakazato

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Samson Toyota-Thailand KO 3 Edgar Tahad
Diego Morales KO 4 Julio Cardona
Martin Castillo W 10 Gabriel Munoz
Paul Weir W 8 Delroy Spencer
Kazuhiro Ryuko KO 2 Kid Hamzah

FLYWEIGHTS

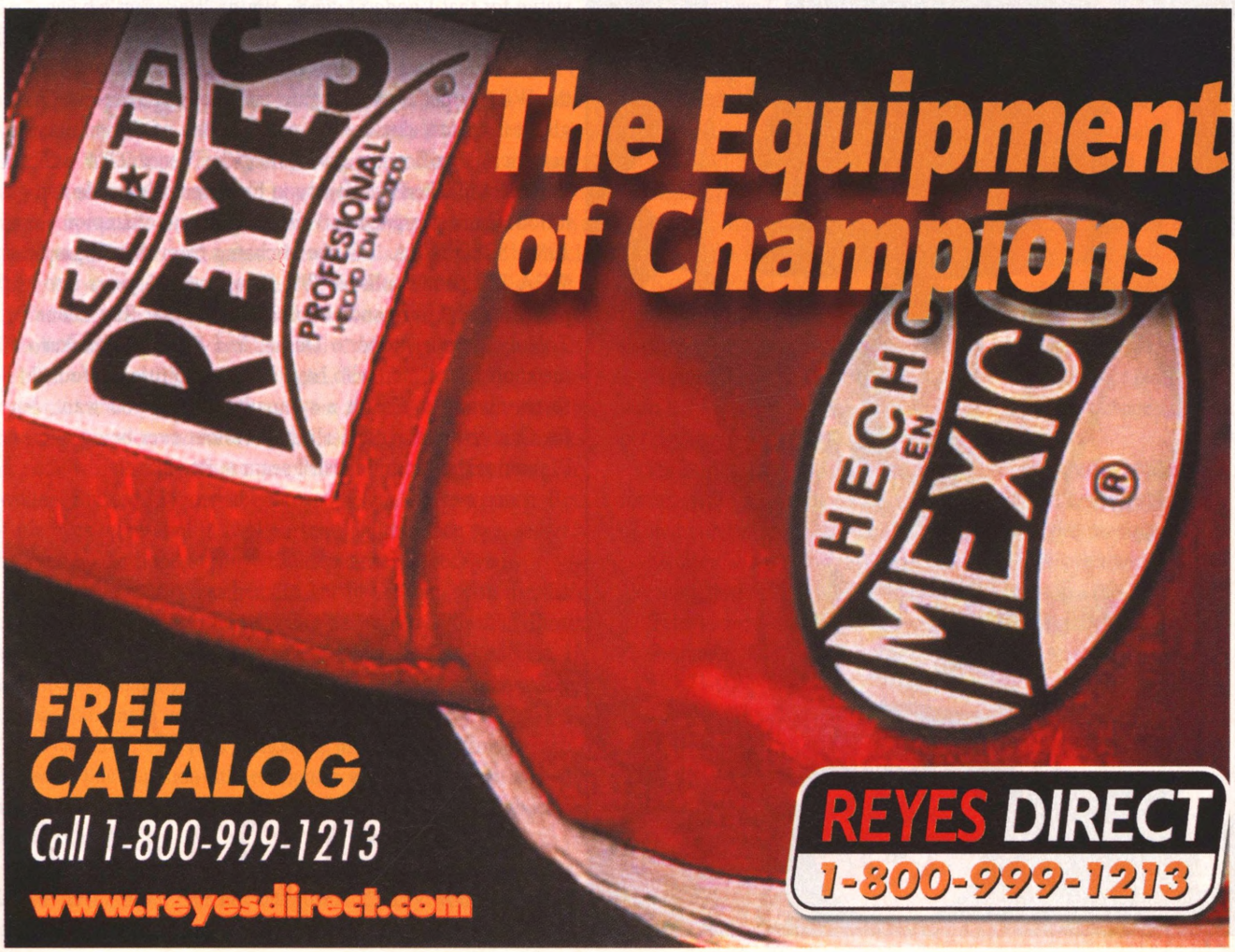
Sornpichai Pisnurachank W 8 Nazario Allawin
Gerson Guerrero KO 2 Oscar Andrade
Mike Trejo Tech. Win 10 Hugo Romero
Hidenobu Honda KO 5 Dowoon Rah
Hiroshi Nakano Tech. Win 10 Melvin Magramo

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Jorge Arce KO 2 Jovan Presbitero
Wolf Tokimitsu W 10 Faisol Akbar
Rocky Palma KO 3 Toga Bantiangan

STRAWWEIGHTS

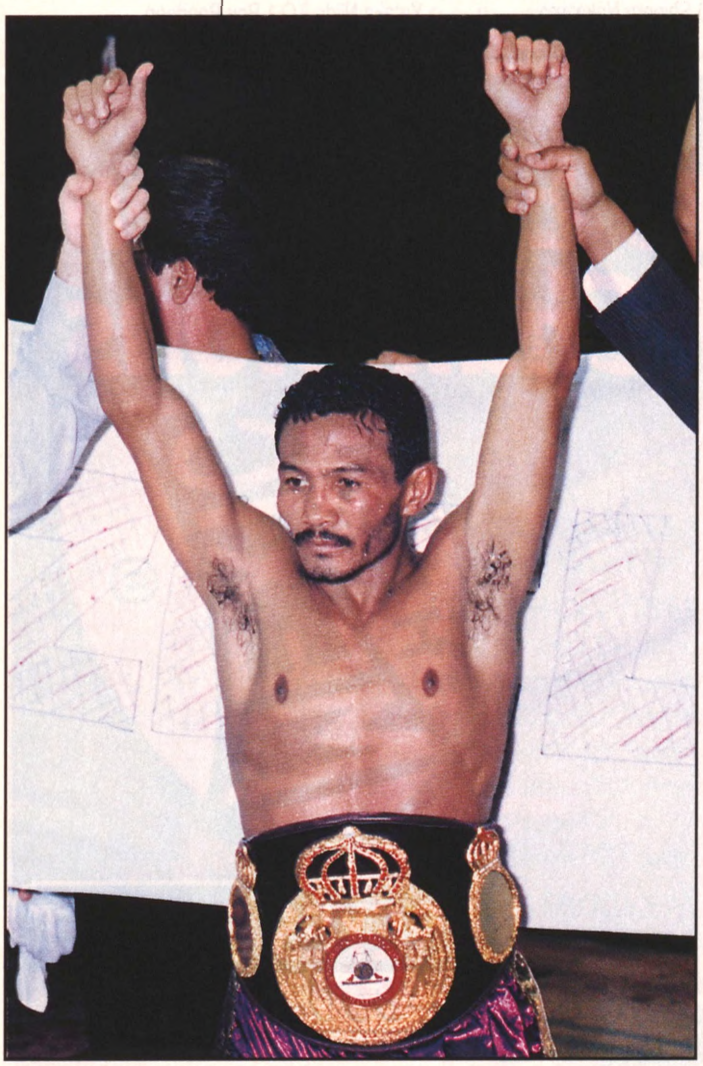
Jose Aguirre KO 4 Erdene Chuluun
(Retains WBC Title)
Chana Porpaoin D 8 Ernesto Rubillar
Yutaka Niida KO 1 Boy Pandeen



RINGSIDE REPORTS

FIGHTER *of the* MONTH

You know how sometimes, late in an entertainer's career, he gets an award he doesn't really deserve because sentimental voters are recognizing his "body of work" instead of the specific material he's being nominated for? Like when Ted Danson, snubbed year after year for the Best Actor Emmy, finally won it in the last two seasons of *Cheers*. Or when the Rolling Stones, always overlooked at the Grammys back when they were a relevant band, somehow took home a statue for that *Voodoo Lounge* album. Well, that's basically what we're doing here with Leo Gamez.



While Gamez' knockout of Hideki Todaka to capture the WBA super flyweight title may not have been the singlemost spectacular boxing performance of the month, its historical significance, given what the Venezuelan veteran had accomplished previously in his career, demands recognition. Gamez reigned as WBA 105-pound champion from 1988-'89, as WBA 108-pound champ from '93-'95, and as WBA 112-pound titlist in '99. Now, over 15 years into his pro career, he joins such luminaries as Sugar Ray Leonard, Tommy Hearns, Roberto Duran, and Pernell Whitaker on the short list of men who have held world titles in four different divisions. Call it a sympathy vote if you want, but for Gamez to have done all that without ever being named Fighter of the Month doesn't seem quite right.

• • • •

Leo Gamez

PHOTO BY STEVE MATTEO/HBO

Burton gave Mayweather a tougher time than most expected

Floyd Mayweather KO 9 Emanuel Burton

Detroit, Michigan: Though this had the look of a mismatch on paper, there was plenty to be intrigued about here. Mayweather was returning after a self-imposed seven-month sabbatical from the ring. The WBC super featherweight champ was making a jump in weight and was taking on an opponent in Burton, 22-17-4 (10), who everyone knew would not back down. Mayweather, 24-0 (18), came into the fight with a new attitude and a new trainer, his uncle Roger Mayweather, who replaced "Pretty Boy's" father, Floyd Sr.

The Cobo Hall crowd received a real treat, as Burton, Chicago, Illinois, bloodied the normally elusive Mayweather, Las Vegas, Nevada, via Grand Rapids, Michigan, for the first time in his professional career. Though Mayweather was in constant control of the fight, his face was severely bruised, blood stained his trunks, his neck was dotted with red droplets, and his right hand was very swollen. Burton, 134, certainly proved he could take a punch. Both of his eyes were almost swollen shut, and his face was severely distorted by the flood of Mayweather punches he received.

"I felt when Mayweather did get in the ring with me, he'd assume he'd be able to do anything he wanted with me," Burton said afterward. "His movement is so fast, but he didn't hurt me. He was too busy running. I'm not saying he can't fight, but he was just too busy moving; I was too busy trying to fight."

Mayweather, 134, paid Burton the ultimate compliment, saying afterward that this non-title encounter was tougher than any title fight he'd competed in. "That's why I took that guy," Mayweather said of Burton.

Using his superior quickness and hand speed, Mayweather, despite taking more punches than usual, clearly won the first five rounds. Burton, meanwhile, kept coming forward, absorbing shot after shot and still managing a grin in between taking punches.

By the third round, Burton's nose and left eye began to ooze blood, but Mayweather began showing some wear as well, with blood starting to trickle down from his nostrils. If Burton, 25, had a harder punch, Mayweather could have been in serious trouble. The 23-year-old Mayweather stunned Burton in the fourth with an overhand right, and in the fifth, with blood flowing freely from his own nose, Mayweather continued to attack, landing another huge right near the end of the round.

But after that, Mayweather's work rate seemed to drop. He began using his speed more, plugging away with the jab, then backing away from Burton before he had a chance to retaliate.

"I think I hurt my hand in the fourth round, but I kept punching with it," Mayweather said. "I can't blow this big of a chance that I got. But my hands were killing me."

As Burton kept taking shots, his eyes became puffier with each round, until finally, his corner threw in the towel at the 1:06 mark of the ninth, and referee Dale Grable (USA) stopped the fight.

"Burton's tough, but this feels good," said Mayweather, a smile gleaming through his swollen lips. "I need fights like this."

Television: HBO
Promoter: Top Rank
(10-21-00)
Joe Santoliquito

Takanori Hatakeyama KO 10 Hiroyuki Sakamoto

Yokohama, Japan: Slick Japanese WBA lightweight champion Hatakeyama, 135, impressively made his first defense of the belt, as he gamely traded punches with hard-hitting compatriot Sakamoto, 135, gutted his way through a grueling fight, and finally

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Judah pounds Quiroz with a left

caught the challenger with a well-timed right to score a fine kayo victory 18 seconds into the 10th round. Most observers agreed that it was one of the best fights ever seen in Japan, and definitely the Fight of the Year in this part of the world. Both contestants put forth everything they had, incessantly swapping punches from the outset to the end. What they displayed wasn't only their power, speed, and skill, but also their fighting hearts.

Through nine rounds, Jesus Cova (Venezuela) scored it 87-85, while Pinit Prayadsab (Thailand) and Ken Morita (Japan) both saw it 88-84, all for Hatakeyama, 24-1-2 (19). Sakamoto, who absorbed much punishment, dropped to 35-5 (25).

Sakamoto, a crouching stylist known for his trademark left hook with which he has produced many clean knockouts, started well, attacking the champ with fast and solid combinations in the opening canto. But Hatakeyama did some damage in that round as well, opening up a cut on the challenger's left eyebrow. Hatakeyama, who had dethroned Venezuelan Gilberto Serrano on an eighth-round demolition four months earlier, didn't utilize his vaunted footwork, but fared surprisingly well in the infighting.

Hatakeyama was in command in the third through the fifth, as he often landed overhand rights with better precision than the wild-punching challenger. Sakamoto, making his fourth challenge for a 135-pound world title, turned more aggressive in the sixth, winning a point and forcing Hatakeyama to get on his bicycle.

The champ, however, took over for good in the seventh, scoring with effective right counters and right crosses. Sakamoto was fading, but kept fighting back with wild, powerful shots from outside, all the while absorbing excessive punishment.

Hatakeyama landed a very solid right just seconds into the 10th round, sending Sakamoto sprawling to the deck. A towel came fluttering into the ring from the loser's corner while referee Masakazu Uchida (Japan) was in the midst of the count. (It is registered as a knockout here in Japan, not a TKO, when the cornerman tosses in the towel while the referee is counting.)

Promoters: Kazunori Miyakawa's Yokohama Hikari Promotions, Akihiko Honda's Teiken Promotions

(10-11-00)

Joe Koizumi

Zab Judah KO 8 Hector Quiroz

Auburn Hills, Michigan: Judah has no problem telling anyone he's the best junior welterweight alive, and his talents suggest that he very well could be. But when he had a chance to prove it to the world against a game but sorely overmatched Quiroz as the main undercard attraction on the Mike Tyson-Andrew Golota show at the Palace of Auburn Hills, Judah flubbed his chance. Judah, 25-0 (19) with 1 no-contest, started extremely well against Quiroz, 31-4-1 (25), but by the middle rounds, he seemed content to do as little as possible to win in his third defense of the IBF 140-pound title.

Using his lightning fast hands, Judah nailed Quiroz, 140, with such a quick left-right-left to the body in the opening round that the Mexican challenger was left wondering what hit him. Judah, 139¼, had Quiroz wobbly in the final minute of the round, and nearly put him down with a left cross.

Judah, Brooklyn, New York, could possibly have finished Quiroz there, but he hesitated. That small lapse gave Quiroz the

chance to regain his composure. Before Judah knew it, the fight had extended another seven rounds.

"Judah is good, quick, and intelligent," Quiroz said. "He hurt me in the first round with the left hand, but I tripped [over one of the ringside commercial pylons] as he hit me. Judah knew he didn't hurt me; that's why he didn't come after me. But I thought I was hurting him, too, to the body. He would play as if he wasn't hurt."

Quiroz found out in the second round that he could hit Judah. It was Quiroz' best round, as he connected with a left that caused Judah's nose to bleed. By the third round, however, Judah, 23, re-established control of the bout, again using his speed to pelt Quiroz, 25, with blazing combinations. The attack caused Quiroz' nose to bust open.

For the remainder of the fight, Judah kept up a steady assault on the much slower Quiroz, yet seemed to be lacking that extra push to end the fight early. By the fifth round, boos began to rain down on Judah.

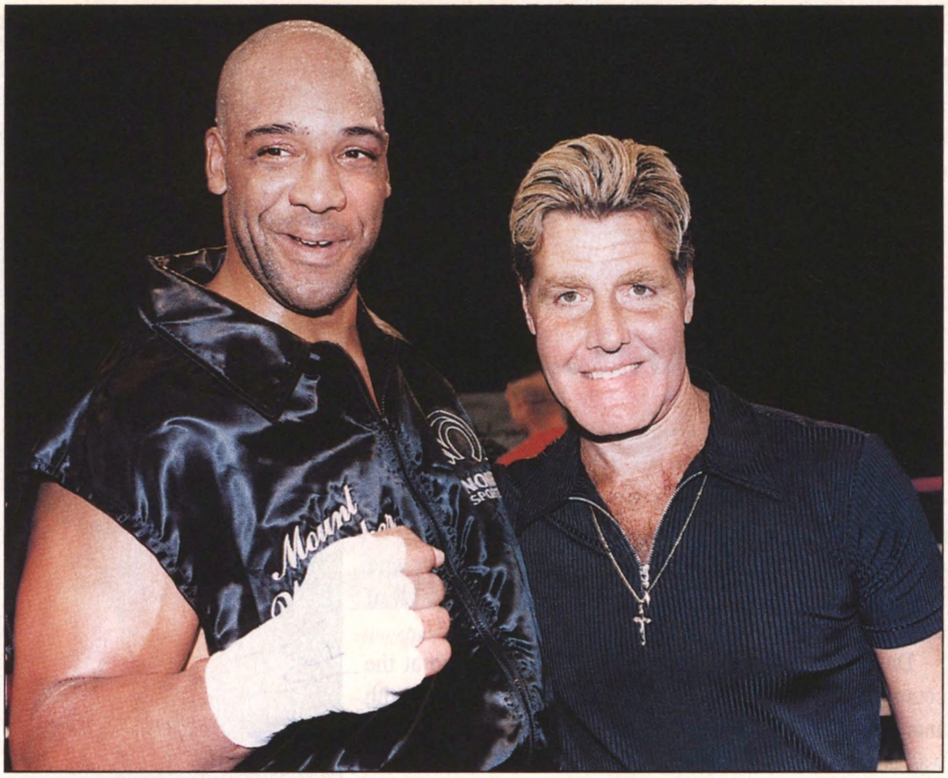


PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Whitaker celebrates Davis kayo with trainer Joe Goossen

"Those boos came from the same fans who would watch me all over again. I didn't pay too much attention to it," said Judah. "I came here to put Quiroz out, but once I calmed down, I started to become more patient. But Quiroz was tough. He had one tough chin."

The bout was finally stopped after the eighth round ended. The right side of Quiroz' face had begun to balloon, and he could barely see out of his swollen right eye, prompting his corner the stop the fight. Judah did not come away unharmed, though, either. The left side of his face was swollen after the fight, and there was a sizable mouse under his right eye.

The referee was Dale Grable (USA).

Television: SET

Promoters: America Presents, Main Events

(10-20-00)

Joe Santoliquito

Leo Gamez KO 7 Hideki Todaka

Nagoya, Japan: Thirty-seven-year-old Venezuelan veteran Gamez, 114¾, amazingly captured his fourth world throne in as many divisions when he battered defending WBA super flyweight champ Todaka, 115, Japan, and finally flattened him with a vicious right at 2:13 of the seventh round at Aichi Prefectural Gymnasium. Some 7,000 spectators watched the stunning upset. The overconfidence of Todaka, making his third defense, might have been the cause of this unexpected defeat.

Through six completed rounds, the five-foot-tall Gamez, 33-7-1 (24), led on all cards. Oscar Perez (USA) had it 58-56, Melchior Taylor (Trinidad & Tobago) saw it 59-55, and Hector Hernandez (Venezuela) had Gamez up 60-56.

Todaka, 27, who dethroned Venezuelan Jesus "Kiki" Rojas on a unanimous nod here in July of the previous year, got off to a good, aggressive start, scoring with overhand rights against the old soldier. But Gamez began his fireworks in the second by connecting with strong right uppercuts and left-right combinations to the stationary champ, and he dominated the third and fourth sessions as well.

In round five, Todaka furiously attacked the Venezuelan in order to take back the initiative, but Gamez fought back with crisp, precise punches. The sixth followed a similar pattern, as Todaka maintained the pressure, but Gamez continued to retaliate with right uppercuts that bounced off the champ's head.

In round seven, Gamez exploded with a lethal shot that sent the champ staggering into the ropes. Todaka was groggy, but he bravely gestured for Gamez to come at him and fight. Gamez gladly obliged, following up with a beautiful right to the chin of the wide-open champ. Todaka, 17-3-1 (8), went down completely prone, and his manager Toshiro Matuso hurriedly entered the ring to signal the champ's surrender to referee Stanley Christodoulou (South Africa).

After the fight, it was discovered that Todaka had fractured the left side of his jaw, an injury expected to keep him out of the ring for at least six months. While the Japanese spectators were disappointed by Todaka's defeat, they still showed great praise for Gamez after his astonishing achievement.

Promoter: Toshiro Matsuo's Midori Promotions

(10-9-00)

Joe Koizumi

Mount Whitaker KO 2 Robert Davis

Uncasville, Connecticut: Before the fight, Davis raised his right hand and swore that he was going to remain undefeated in his pro-

fessional career by hurdling the towering heavyweight known as Mount Whitaker. Unfortunately for the fighter from Akron, Ohio, he never raised his left hand to fend off a furious attack of right crosses from his powerful opponent. It didn't take long for the consequence to come crashing down upon Davis' head, as the 6'8", 253½-pound Whitaker, 22-1 (18), made easy work of the untested Davis.

Most of the first round was merely a feeling out until Whitaker, Granada Hills, California, landed the first right that he threw with any conviction. It staggered Davis, 236½, momentarily, but Whitaker never followed up, and the round came to a merciful end.

The second round, however, was another story. Sensing that he could land the right hand with considerable ease, Whitaker, 28, popped Davis with a light, range-finding jab, then unloaded a cannon right to Davis' cheek. The smaller man was obviously shaken, and Whitaker followed up with a flurry of power shots, all of them coming from the right hand.

Davis finally dropped to the canvas, but was up at the count of five, just in time for Whitaker to press forward with another sledgehammer right, this one flush on the jaw. Davis was down for the second time in the round, but crawled to his feet at four.

As the Davis corner ordered their man to hang on, it was apparent that the fighter's legs were reduced to putty. Three more right hands from Whitaker prompted referee Charlie Dwyer (USA) to step in and halt the bout at 2:29 of the round, just as Davis began his third descent to the canvas.

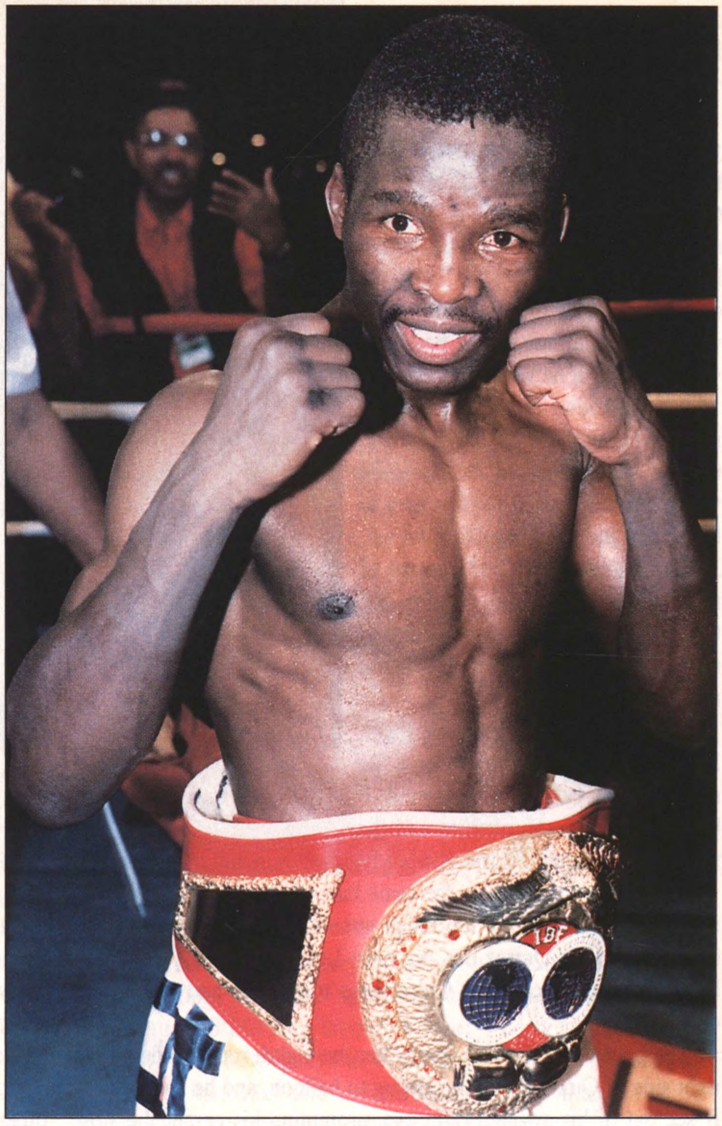
The 29-year-old Davis, who had been promised a fight with comebacking Michael Grant if he had beaten Whitaker, dropped to 22-1 (14).

Television: HBO

Promoters: Cedric Kushner Promotions, America Presents

(10-7-00)

Ted Bodenrader



Ledwaba tallied his third defense

Lehlo Ledwaba KO 8 Eduardo Alvarez

Maidstone, England: Emphasizing his growing status as a fighter of note, Ledwaba, 121½, South Africa, ruthlessly ended the challenge of Argentine Alvarez, 121, with a devastating left hook to the body to retain the IBF junior featherweight title at the Maidstone Leisure Centre. It was his third defense of the belt vacated by compatriot Vuyani Bungu before his ill-fated challenge of featherweight king Naseem Hamed.

Ledwaba, 31-1-1 (21), is proving to be a worthy successor to the man who held the title through 13 defenses and remained unbeaten for eight years before encountering Hamed. Ledwaba's patient pursuit of his adversary is made all the more impressive by the efficiency with which he effects the finish. None of his energy is wasted. When he moves in to complete the slaying of an opponent, his execution is equal to his intent. Alvarez bore a pained expression even before being felled in the eighth round, which vividly portrayed his feelings of being overwhelmed.

The 25-year-old challenger was game, however. Though hurt to the body and by several punches to the head in the opening two rounds, he fought back. The lack of any real power hurt his chances of being able to hold the champion at bay for 12 rounds, but he stayed in close to lessen the impact of Ledwaba's blows and forced the champion to rethink his tactics. Varying his distances, Ledwaba, 29, connected with a couple of solid left hooks in the fifth and reasserted his superiority with a series of blows to the head and body.

Pinned to the ropes for much of the fight, Alvarez, 28-3 (5), was there again when Ledwaba began his downfall in the eighth with a measuring left and a mighty right that clearly hurt the challenger. A three-punch combination made Alvarez vulnerable, as his body became blatantly exposed. Ledwaba needed no invitation, landing the left hook that completed the challenger's demise. Referee Roy Francis (England) counted him out at 2:48 of the round.

Promoter: Golden Fists

(10-6-00)

Brian Doogan ■

New Face

(Continued from page 18)

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

Hanshaw fires a left to Boddie's ribs

training fighters, and one of the first times Hanshaw walked unaided came in the gym. It was his father who taught Hanshaw, who is naturally left-handed, to box in a conventional right-handed stance, and it was his father who taught him the proper way to throw a punch.

"My father taught me everything I know; Mark is just sharpening them up," said Hanshaw. "I can go out and open my own gym with everything my dad taught me about boxing."

Sometimes those lessons came at Hanshaw loudly and concisely, and at times his father seemed brusque. Still, he liked working with kids and had an extensive boxing background. At one time, the elder Hanshaw had been Earnie Shavers' sparring partner, a testament to how tough he was. Later, he served as a bodyguard for actor Jimmy Walker, rapper Heavy D, and singers Ike and Tina Turner.

Russell was shot four times working as a private investigator before going into the landscaping business. But his new line of work turned out to be just as dangerous, and he once fell from a 50-foot tree. The mishap that ended Russell's life occurred while he was cutting tree branches and accidentally caught some electrical wires.

Russell did not want his son to lead the life he had, and saw boxing as a refuge. Hanshaw said that his father *had* to be tough on him, though he did not always agree with his dad's methods of expressing tough love.

"When he was hard on me, I would cry," Hanshaw recalled. "I remember some of the things he had me do. It was a father-and-son thing, and he would always be harder on me than everyone else. My uncles would ask him to give me a break, and my father would basically tell them to shut up.

"When I was 17, I wanted to take some time off, then get back in the gym, but my father would always holler at me, 'Boy, you know how you get when you take time off.' He used to care about me a lot, though. Now, as I get older, I'm starting to realize that my dad was right. The same things he used to say to me come out of my mouth now. He wouldn't let me hang out with my friends, and some of these guys are in prison today. I have friends that got killed, and they didn't have any father behind them. My father stayed on me."

Breland, who won gold as a welterweight in the '84 Olympics and now splits his time between acting and training fighters, sees the imprint Hanshaw's father left every day in the gym. He feels fortunate to have a fighter willing to learn and, more importantly, listen.

"That's a big plus with Tony, especially dealing with the younger generation today," Breland said. "A lot of these kids think they know it all. His father did a great job and trained him very well. He got Tony where he is today; all of his fundamentals come from what his father taught him. I just tighten up little things he does. He thirsts for knowledge and has natural boxing instincts."

How far Hanshaw can go remains a question, but there are some early indications that he has the skills to become a contender. He took a nice step toward maturing when he faced rough Philadelphia veteran Ron Boddie on ESPN2's *Friday Night Fights* on October 6 in Atlantic City.

Boddie, who had only been stopped once, took the fight on four days notice, but was in good shape. It was the kind of challenge that would test Hanshaw's patience, will, and emotional stability. Breland was curious to see how Hanshaw would react to getting hit, since he's shown a tendency to retaliate wildly in previous fights.

Hanshaw passed all the measures easily, scoring a 60-54 decision under New Jersey's majority scoring system.

"Hanshaw's a talented kid, there's no question about that," said ESPN2 ringside color analyst Teddy Atlas. "At this stage of Hanshaw's career, it's not about talent, it's about handling things emotionally, facing tough tests against tough guys. This fight with Boddie will make him a better fighter. He was pushed a little in there and he made the right decisions. That's what impressed me the most. He made good decisions, like using his jab, boxing more, instead of going for the knockout. He made the choice to adjust.

"A lot of kids like him don't make those choices, until it's too late in their careers. They're used to going in and destroying easy guys, so when they face someone tough, they're not prepared. This was an important fight for Hanshaw. It's going to help him reach that level where he won't have to think about the choices; he'll do them instinctively."

Hanshaw still remembers his father vividly. He's often reminded by his mother, "You act just like your daddy." He says he'd like to hear his father's voice again, and that he's heard some people claim they've heard the voices of deceased loved ones. But all Hanshaw needs to do his open his mouth, and the tone and the words will be familiar ones. ■

Ayala-Tapia II

(Continued from page 41)

"I commend Dean for having the courage to take a stand against this kind of judging," she said. "We all believe Johnny won and he got screwed out of the decision, even more so in this fight than in the first one. That the IBA has decided to take a stand on our behalf is great as far as we're concerned.

"Maybe these judges have too much power. If they're not judging properly, they need to be trained properly or get out of the business."

Tapia, though, has no plans to get out of the business and still has his eye on a big-money fight with Naseem Hamed, who is generally recognized as the world's best featherweight. Teresa Tapia said two days after the fight that her husband, who went into a severe depression after his first loss to Ayala and had to be briefly hospitalized as a result, was still "stunned and significantly disappointed," but that he was doing all right emotionally. Tapia had said prior to the fight that he would quit in the ring "the first time I get my ass kicked real bad." But he said Ayala did not do that and insisted he plans to fight at least three or four more times.

"Why shouldn't I keep on?" he said. "Look at the way I fought Paulie: I boxed him beautifully. I didn't look old, did I? I did what I had to do. I know in my heart I won that fight. There isn't a question. So, given that, why shouldn't I keep fighting?"

Ayala, too, plans to keep fighting, but despite his stated intention before the fight to return to bantamweight, he said afterward that he would consider campaigning as a featherweight if it meant a match against Hamed. Ayala had agreed to a contract to fight Hamed in early-2000, but that deal fell through and the flamboyant Brit went on to fight, and knock out, Augie Sanchez. Ayala said he would like a chance against Hamed and felt his performance against Tapia proved he is capable of dealing with a featherweight.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Ayala rejoices after hearing the official decision. In the background, you can see Tapia about to flip out, while referee Richard Steele and a security guard move in to restrain him.

Much was made by Reid prior to the fight of Tapia's increased punching power. Most fighters don't carry their power with them as they go up in weight, but Reid said Tapia, never a big puncher at either 115 or 118, was hitting significantly harder as a featherweight. "That's because this is his natural weight," Reid said.

Tapia said he'd had to subsist on ice cubes in the days before the first fight with Ayala in order to make the weight. But Tapia didn't show much power against Ayala in either fight and clearly isn't the puncher that Hamed is. Given that Ayala himself is not much of a puncher, that would seem to make for a mismatch if the Texan fought Hamed. But Ayala wasn't concerned.

"I'm not a huge puncher, but I don't tap," Ayala said. "I'll sting you."

In his dressing room after the fight, Ayala held an ice bag against his right eye, which was grotesquely swollen. But he had the look of a man content with his station in life. Ayala made numerous concessions in order to make the rematch a reality. He took the shorter purse, he agreed to fight at the weight Tapia wanted, and he didn't argue as the fight slipped back and forth from a 10-rounder to a 12-rounder before finally landing on 12. He said there was a simple reason he did all of that.

"I didn't want any excuses," Ayala said. "I made all of the concessions that I did because I knew I was going to win. I knew I would beat Johnny. He's a great champion, but he can't beat me. I truly believe I'm the best fighter in the world.

"I thought I would just go along with everything and get the fight done because I had something to prove. I wanted to show the first fight wasn't a fluke. A lot of people talked about how Tapia got upset before the first fight and got out of his game plan. Well, I let him pick all the parameters this time because I knew I would win and I knew that would finally answer all the questions."

Unfortunately for Ayala, winning doesn't necessarily answer all the questions. When he and Tapia get together, it's never quite that simple. ■

Kevin Iole covers boxing for the Las Vegas Review-Journal and is a regular contributor to this magazine.

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Byrd vs. Klitschko

(Continued from page 49)

Tracy came into the ring, hugging me and crying on my shoulder. I told her I was so sorry. I know how hard it was for her to watch. But as I left the ring, some of the fans were waiting to tell me that I'd be back and that they loved me. They really appreciated that I didn't quit.

The locker room was quiet after the fight. I don't think anyone really knew what to say. My dad was focusing on getting the swelling down so I could go to the postfight press conference. One thing we did talk about was how rude Vitaly's wife was to Tracy and the rest of my family, and how the people she was with were yelling and booing in Tracy's face. I think Tracy could have actually had her own boxing match going on next to mine. Talk about a lack of sportsmanship.

All I was thinking about was that I couldn't believe the way I lost, knowing that I didn't fight the way I normally do. But I don't want to take anything away from Wladimir. I feel that he's a good boxer and will soon be ready to fight Lennox Lewis.

It was strange how people looked at me at the airport the next morning. If I had fought in the States, I would not have been so recognizable. But people actually told me "good fight" and wanted my autograph. The plane ride home was harder on my wife than me. I wanted to sleep; she wanted to cry.

We flew into Detroit instead of my hometown of Flint, Michigan. Good thing, too. If I'd gone directly home, I think the whole membership of my church would have showed up in sympathy. Instead, a couple of friends who live close to the airport greeted us with flowers, a banner, and hugs.

Later that evening, we returned home to our three kids. They already knew I'd lost. Of the three, my five-year-old son was the only one who really seemed to care. He was disappointed that my chances of fighting Lewis were now slim. He really wanted that fight because Lennox is his favorite fighter. Isn't that messed up? All I was worried about was how the kids would react to my swollen eyes. Surprisingly, they weren't bothered by it.

And so life goes on. I still love the sport of boxing and I'm still very confident that I will get another chance to prove that I'm one of the best heavyweights in the world. ■

Byrd, both of his eyes practically closed, was in serious trouble in the late rounds, but he bravely lasted the distance despite suffering two knockdowns.

"Tired of absurd rankings by boxing's dubious governing bodies?

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— Sports Illustrated (May 15, 2000)

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WORLDWIDE RATINGS

The ratings of the three major governing bodies recognized by The Ring are supplied by the organizations themselves. They are updated on these pages as soon as they are made available to us. In this issue, the WBA ratings were complied as of September 2000, the WBC as of October 2000, and the IBF as of October 2000.

HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Lennox Lewis (GB)	C	–	C
Evander Holyfield (USA)	–	C	–
David Tua (NZ)	1	4	1
Mike Tyson (USA)	2	6	10
Wladimir Klitschko (UKR)	3	–	7
Larry Donald (USA)	4	7	3
John Ruiz (USA)	5	–	–
Kirk Johnson (CAN)	6	–	6
Oleg Maskaev (UKR)	7	3	12
Henry Akinwande (GB)	8	10	–
Andrew Golota (POL)	9	–	–
Clifford Etienne (USA)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	2
John Ruiz (USA)	–	5	8
Kirk Johnson (CAN)	–	8	–
Vitaly Klitschko (UKR)	–	9	–
Danell Nicholson (USA)	–	–	4
Hasim Rahman (USA)	15	–	5
Michael Grant (USA)	12	–	9

CRUISERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Juan Carlos Gomez (CUBA)	C	–	–
Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)	–	C	–
Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)	–	–	C
James Toney (USA)	1	2	6
Marcelo Dominguez (ARG)	2	4	5
Wayne Braithwaite (GUY)	3	–	9
Alex Gonzalez (PR)	4	11	–
Torsten May (GER)	5	8	2
Louis Azille (DR)	6	10	8
Carl Thompson (GB)	7	5	3
Ezra Sellars (USA)	8	12	7
Arthur Williams (USA)	9	6	4
Jorge Castro (ARG)	10	–	–
Virgil Hill (USA)	–	1	11
Alexander Gurov (UKR)	–	3	–
Valery Vikhor (LAT)	–	7	–
Andre Purlette (GUY)	–	9	–
Alex Gonzales (USA)	–	–	1
William Guthrie (USA)	23	–	10

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Roy Jones (USA)	C	C	C
Michael Nunn (USA)	1	–	–
Clinton Woods (GB)	2	7	4
Reggie Johnson (USA)	3	10	12
Eric Harding (USA)	4	–	3
Yawe Davis (ITA)	5	–	–
David Telesco (USA)	6	4	11
Thomas Ulrich (GER)	7	–	–
Glenn Kelly (AUSTRL)	8	5	1
Derrick Harmon (USA)	9	3	8
Jean-Marc Mormerck (FRA)	10	–	–
Lou Del Valle (USA)	–	1	–
Frank Liles (USA)	–	2	–
Richard Hall (USA)	18	6	–
Jorge Castro (ARG)	–	8	–
Julio Gonzalez (USA)	13	9	–
Vacant	–	–	2
Antonio Tarver (USA)	14	–	5
Lincoln Carter (USA)	11	12	6
Will Taylor (USA)	–	–	7
Billy Lewis (USA)	–	–	9
Lee Osie (SPA)	19	–	10

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Dingaan Thobela (SA)	C	–	–
Bruno Girard (FRA)	–	C	–
Sven Ottke (GER)	–	–	C
Eric Lucas (CAN)	1	–	–
Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)	2	1	4
Glenn Catley (GB)	3	–	–
Markus Beyer (GER)	4	–	11
Mario Velt (GER)	5	3	10
Richie Woodhall (GB)	6	5	–
Dana Rosenblatt (USA)	7	2	–
Stephane Ouellet (CAN)	8	–	–
Guy Waters (AUSTRL)	9	–	6
David Starie (GB)	10	10	–
Byron Mitchell (USA)	11	4	–
Manuel Siacca (PR)	–	6	–
Mike Makata (NZ)	–	7	–
Thomas Tate (USA)	14	8	3
Mads Larsen (DEN)	12	9	–
James Butler (USA)	19	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Charles Brewer (USA)	–	11	5
Syd Vanderpool (CAN)	–	–	7
Guillermo Jones (PAN)	–	–	8
Willie McIntyre (USA)	18	–	9

MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Keith Holmes (USA)	C	–	–
William Joppy (USA)	–	C	–
Bernard Hopkins (USA)	–	–	C
Erland Betare (FRA)	1	–	–
David Reid (USA)	2	2	–
Howard Eastman (GB)	3	1	6
Robert McCracken (GB)	4	–	–
Ali Ennebati (FRA)	5	–	9
Kevin Palmer (USA)	6	–	–
Antwun Echols (USA)	7	4	–
Guillermo Jones (PAN)	8	3	–
Brian Barbosa (USA)	9	–	3
Jerry Elliott (NIG)	10	–	–
Darren Obah (AUSTRL)	–	5	–
Julio Cesar Green (DR)	–	6	–
Rito Ruvalcaba (MEX)	–	7	–
Hassine Cherifi (FRA)	–	8	11
Lonnie Bradley (USA)	–	9	–
Jonathan Reid (USA)	21	10	–
Antwun Echols (USA)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Carl Daniels (USA)	–	–	4
Stephane Ouellet (CAN)	–	–	5
Santos Cardona (PR)	–	–	7
Armand Krajnc (SLV)	–	–	8
Lansana Djallo (JUI)	–	–	10

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Francisco Castillejo (SPA)	C	–	–
Felix Trinidad (PR)	–	C	–
Fernando Vargas (USA)	–	–	C
Roman Karmazin (RUS)	1	6	–
Alfred Ankamah (GHA)	2	–	–
Winky Wright (USA)	3	3	1
Carl Daniels (USA)	4	4	–
Quirino Garcia (MEX)	5	–	–
Tony Marshall (USA)	6	–	–
Kevin Kelly (USA)	7	7	–
Derrell Coley (USA)	8	–	–
Akira Ohigashi (JAP)	9	12	–
J.C. Candelo (COL)	10	–	12
Vacant	–	1	–
Jose Flores (MEX)	11	2	4
Ike Quartey (GHA)	–	5	9
Julio Cesar Vazquez (ARG)	–	8	–
Ricardo Mayorga (NIC)	29	9	–
Mamadou Thiam (FRA)	–	10	–
Robert Frazier (USA)	–	–	2
Bronco McKart (USA)	12	–	3
Ross Thompson (USA)	–	–	5
Emmett Linton (USA)	–	11	6
Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)	30	–	7
Evans Ashira (DEN)	–	–	8
Alex Bunema (USA)	–	–	10

WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Shane Mosley (USA)	C	–	–
Vacant	–	C	C
Oscar De La Hoya (USA)	1	2	–
Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)	2	7	4
Ike Quartey (GHA)	3	–	–
Miguel Angel Gonzalez (MEX)	4	–	–
Alessandro Duran (ITA)	5	10	–
Jose Luis Cruz (MEX)	6	–	–
Kofi Jantuah (GHA)	7	–	10
Nicolas Cervera (COL)	8	–	–
Carlos Baldomir (ARG)	9	9	–
Oba Carr (USA)	10	6	3
Andrew Lewis (GUY)	20	1	–
Michael Trabant (GERE)	22	3	–
Arturo Gatti (USA)	–	4	12
Thomas Damgaard (DEN)	13	5	–
Frank Olsen (DEN)	12	8	5
Raul Frank (USA)	–	–	1
Vernon Forrest (USA)	–	–	2
Steve Roberts (GB)	–	–	6
Michele Piccirillo (ITA)	16	–	7
Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)	25	–	8
Charles Murray (USA)	–	–	9

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)	C	–	–
Sharmba Mitchell (USA)	–	C	–
Zab Judah (USA)	–	–	C
Oktay Urkal (TUR)	1	3	8
Hector Camacho Jr (PR)	2	1	–

Diobelis Hurtado (CUB)	3	2	–
Arturo Gatti (CAN)	4	–	–
Gianluca Branco (ITA)	5	–	–
Ricky Quiles (USA)	6	–	–
Mikhail Krivolapov (RUS)	7	–	–
Ben Tackie (GHA)	8	8	–
Ray Oliveira (USA)	9	–	6
Vince Phillips (USA)	10	–	–
Antonio Diaz (USA)	15	4	–
Miguel Angel Gonzalez (MEX)	–	5	–
Khalid Rahilou (FRA)	–	6	–
John-John Molina (PR)	–	7	–
Gabriel Mapuoka (FRA)	11	9	7
Ricky Hatton (GB)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Allan Vester (DEN)	–	–	3
George Scott (SWE)	23	–	4
Terronn Millett (USA)	–	–	5
Reggie Green (USA)	–	–	9
DeMarcus Corley (USA)	–	–	10

LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Jose Luis Castillo (MEX)	C	–	–
Takanori Hatakeyama (JAP)	–	C	–
Paul Spadafora (USA)	–	–	C
Cesar Bazan (MEX)	1	–	8
Steve Johnston (USA)	2	–	3
Lawrence Ngobeni (SA)	3	–	–
Rick Yoshimura (JAP)	4	4	–
Julien Lorcy (FRA)	5	2	4
Billy Schwer (GB)	6	–	–
Lovemore Ndou (SA)	7	–	–
Thembinkosi Ntyenene (SA)	8	–	–
Alberto Sicurella (ARG)	9	3	–
Jose Luis Juarez (MEX)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	–
Gilbert Serrano (VEN)	–	5	–
Stefano Zoff (ITA)	–	6	–
Jean-Baptiste Mendy (FRA)	15	7	–
Raul Balbi (ARG)	–	8	–
Oscar Garcia Cano (SPA)	12	9	–
Edson Xuxa Nascimento (BRA)	22	10	11
Billy Irwin (CAN)	19	–	1
Joel Perez (USA)	–	–	2
Juan Gomez-Trinidad (PR)	–	12	5
Hector Camacho Jr. (USA)	–	–	6
Guillermo Mosquera (COL)	–	–	7
Juan Lazcano (USA)	14	–	9
Victoriano Damian Sosa (DR)	13	–	10

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Floyd Mayweather (USA)	C	–	–
Joel Casamayor (CUB)	–	C	–
Vacant	–	1	C
Jesus Chavez (USA)	1	11	7
Sirimongkol Singmanassuk (THAI)	2	–	–
Kengo Nagashima (JAP)	3	–	–
Dennis Holbaek (DEN)	4	10	–
Tiger Ari (PHIL)	5	–	–
Goyo Vargas (MEX)	6	–	–
Carlos Hernandez (EL SALV)	7	–	–
Tontcho Tontchev (BUL)	8	4	11
Alejandro Gonzalez (MEX)	9	–	–
Boris Sinitsin (RUS)	10	–	–
Lakva Sim (MON)	–	2	–
Yodsanan Nanthachai (THAI)	–	3	–
Jongkwon Baek (KOR)	14	5	–
Luis Navarro (USA)	18	6	10
Steve Forbes (USA)	26	7	2
Robert Garcia (USA)	16	8	6
Jorge Barrios (ARG)	–	9	–
John Brown (USA)	–	–	1
Raul Balbi (ARG)	–	–	3
Carlos Hernandez (USA)	–	–	4
Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)	–	–	5
David Santos (USA)	–	–	8
Juan Arias (USA)	–	–	9

FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Guty Espadas (MEX)	C	–	–
Derrick Gainer (USA)	–	C	–
Paul Ingle (GB)	–	–	C
Injin Chi (KOR)	1	–	–
Tony Wehbee (AUS)	2	–	8
Luisito Espinosa (PHIL)	3	–	–
Edgar Barcenas (MEX)	4	–	–
Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)	5	4	–
Scott Harrison (GB)	6	–	–
Hector Velazquez (MEX)	7	–	–
Manuel Calvo (SPA)	8	–	–
Raul Perez (MEX)	9	–	–
Juan Carlos Ramirez (MEX)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	–
Victor Polo (COL)	–	2	4
Angel Vasquez (PR)	19	3	3
Philip Ndou (SA)	–	5	–
Istvan Kovacs (HUN)	–	6	–
Lewis Woods (US)	–	7	–
Fred Norwood (USA)	–	8	–
Pablo Chacon (ARG)	–	9	–
Kengo Nagashima (JAP)	–	10	–
Manuel Medina (MEX)	13	–	1
Mbulelo Botile (SA)	–	–	2
Naseem Hamed (GB)	–	–	5
David Toledo (USA)	–	–	6
Oscar Larios (MEX)	–	–	7
Augie Sanchez (USA)	–	–	9
Frankie Toledo (USA)	–	–	10

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Willie Jorrin (USA)	C	–	–
Clarence Adams (USA)	–	C	–
Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)	–	–	C
Oscar Larios (MEX)	1	–	–
Michael Brodie (GB)	2	12	8
Sergei Devakov (UKR)	3	–	3
Wayne McCullough (IRE)	4	–	–
Manny Pacquaio (PHIL)	5	–	4
Cesar Soto (MEX)	6	–	–
Enrique Sanchez (MEX)	7	8	5
Israel Vazquez (MEX)	8	–	7
Yongjin Cho (KOR)	9	–	–
Agapito Sanchez (DR)	10	–	11
Vacant	–	1	1
Yobert Ortega (VEN)	17	2	–
Kozo Ishii (JAP)	–	3	–
Jose Rojas (VEN)	26	4	–
Bugiarso (INDO)	–	5	–
Nestor Garza (MEX)	–	6	–
Vladislav Antonov (RUS)	19	7	–
Osamu Sato (JAP)	15	9	–
Eduardo Alvarez (ARG)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	2
F. Rakkiatgym (INDO)	–	–	6
Hector Julia Avila (DR)	12	–	9
Arnel Barotillo (AUSTRL)	28	–	10

BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Veerapol Sahaprom (THAI)	C	–	–
Paul Ayala (USA)	–	C	–
Tim Austin (USA)	–	–	C
Cuauhtemoc Gomez (MEX)	1	4	–
Adan Vargas (MEX)	2	6	3
Ricardo Barajas (MEX)	3	–	–
Jess Maca (PHIL)	4	–	–
Hugo Dianzo (MEX)	5	–	–
Rafael Marquez (MEX)	6	8	9
Gerardo Martinez (MEX)	7	–	–
Alejandro Estrada (MEX)	8	–	–
Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)	9	–	–
Genaro Garcia (USA)	10	11	–
Vacant	–	1	2
Sahoiu Sithchai Condo (THAI)	–	2	–
Danny Romero (USA)	–	3	5
Fernando Montiel (MEX)	–	5	–
Johnny Bredahl (DEN)	–	7	–
Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)	–	9	–
Jorge Eliecer Julio (COL)	–	10	–
Jesus Perez (COL)	23	–	1
Pete Frissina (USA)	–	–	4
Arthur Johnson (USA)	–	–	6
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	–	–	7
Luigi Castiglione (ITA)	–	–	8
Steve Dotse (GHA)	–	–	10

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Masanori Tokuyama (JAP)	C	–	–
Hideki Todaka (JAP)	–	C	–
Felix Machado (VEN)	–	–	C
Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)	1	–	–
In Joo Cho (KOR)	2	–	–
Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)	3	–	–
Seungrok Choi (KOR)	4	–	–
Fernando Montiel (MEX)	5	–	–
Kazuhiro Ryuko (JAP)	6	–	–
Akihigo Nago (JAP)	7	6	–
Reynaldo Hurtado (COL)	8	–	–
Jose Angel Beranza (MEX)	9	–	–
Bernie Torres (PHIL)	10	–	–
Leo Gamez (VEN)	–	1	–
Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	–	2	5
Jesus Rojas (VEN)	–	3	3
Edison Torres (VEN)	–	4	–
Jesper Jensen (DEN)	–	5	–
Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)	–	7	–
Luis Bolanos (COL)	–	8	7
Vernie Torres (USA)	–	9	6
Diego Morales (MEX)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Adonis Rivas (NIC)	–	–	4
Mauricio Pastrana (COL)	11	–	8
Julio Gamboa (NIC)	–	–	9
Everardo Morales (MEX)	–	–	10

FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Malcolm Tunacao (PHIL)	C	–	–
Eric Morel (USA)	–	C	–
Irene Pacheco (COL)	–	–	C
Chatchai Sasakul (THAI)	1	–	–
Alex Ali Baba (GHA)	2	–	12
Celes Kobayashi (JAP)	3	–	–
David Guerault (FRA)	4	5	1
Gabriel Mira (MEX)	5	–	–
Medgoen Singsurat (THAI)	6	–	–
Mike Trejo (USA)	7	6	–
Saen Sor Ploenchit (THAI)	8	–	–
Hiroshi Nakano (JAP)	9	–	–
Everardo Morales (MEX)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	2
Denkaosaen Kaowitch (THAI)	–	2	–
Panieng Okuda (THAI)	–	3	–
Sornpichai Kratchingdaeng (THAI)	–	4	–
Gilberto Gonzalez (VEN)	–	7	–
Mzukisi Sikali (SA)	–	8	–
Jose Lopez (VEN)	–	9	–
Alejandro Montiel (MEX)	11	10	5
Hawk Makepula (SA)	–	–	3
Zoltan Lunka (TUR)	16	–	4
Shiro Yahiro (JAP)	–	–	6
Martin Castillo (MEX)	17	–	7
Edicson Torres (PAN)	–	–	8
Ferid Ben Jeddou (TUN)	–	–	9
Pedro Pena (USA)	–	–	10

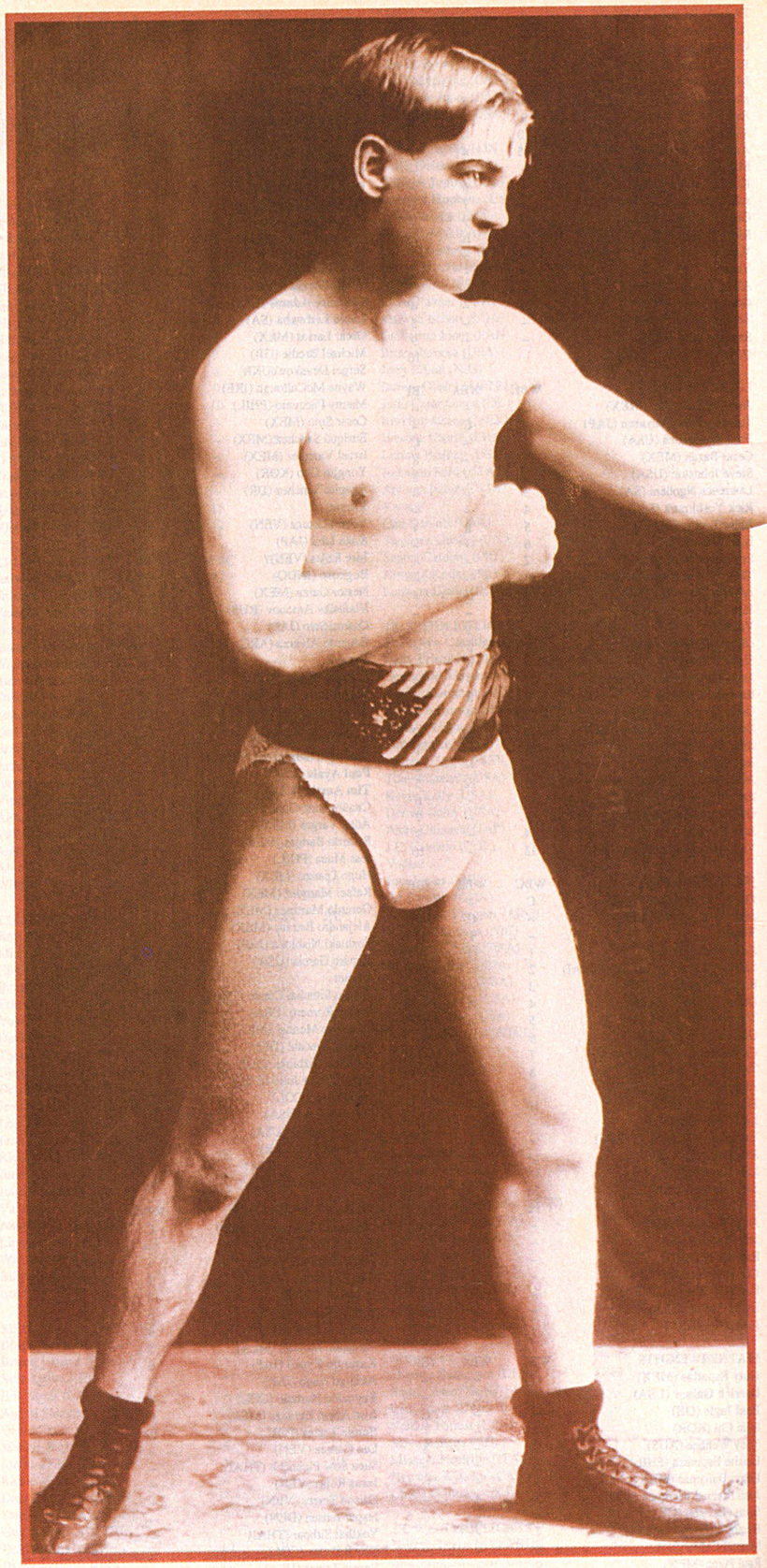
JR. FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Yosam Choi (KOR)	C	–	–
Bebis Mendoza (COL)	–	C	–
Ricardo Lopez (MEX)	–	–	C
Jorge Arce (MEX)	1	6	11
Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)	2	8	–
Hidenobu Honda (JAP)	3	2	–
Panieng Sasiprabha (THAI)	4	–	–
Pongsaklek Wonjongkam (THAI)	5	–	–
Takayuki Korogi (JAP)	6	–	–
Eric Ortiz (MEX)	7	–	–
Juanito Rubillar (PHIL)	8	–	–
Kohki Tanaka (JAP)	9	11	–
Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)	10	–	–
Pichitnoi C. Siriwat (THAI)	–	1	–
Yura Dimas (MON)	18	3	–
Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)	–	4	–
Pongsaklek Nakornton (THAI)	–	5	–
Masibulele Makepula (SA)	–	7	–
Noel Arambulet (VEN)	–	9	–
Nelson Dieppa (DR)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Ratanapol Sor Vorapin (THAI)	24	–	3
Zolani Petelo (SA)	–	–	4
Everardo Morales (MEX)	–	–	5
Pongsaklek Sithkanongsak (THAI)	–	–	6
Alex Sanchez (PR)	–	–	7
Will Grigsby (USA)	–	–	8
Taekil Lee (KOR)	25	–	9
Domingo Guillen (DR)	–	–	10

STRAWWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Jose Antonio Aguirre (MEX)	C	–	–
Joma Gamboa (PHIL)	–	C	–
Zolani Petelo (SA)	–	–	C
Erdene Chuluun (MON)	1	–	–
Wandee Chor Chareon (THAI)	2	–	8
Yasuo Tokimitsu (JAP)	3	–	9
Juan Keb Baas (MEX)	4	–	–
Makoto Suzuki (JAP)	5	10	–
Jaewon Kim (KOR)	6	–	–
Keitaro Hoshino (JAP)	7	12	–
Manny Melchor (PHIL)	8	–	–
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	9	11	–
Khulile Makeba (SA)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	2
Chana Porpaoin (THAI)	–	2	–
Daniel Reyes (COL)	–	3	1
Jose Garcia (COL)	–	4	–
Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)	14	5	–
Songkram Porpaoin (THAI)	–	6	–
Satoru Abe (JAP)	16	7	–
Udomdet Porpaoin (THAI)	–	8	–
Fasan Pongsawan (THAI)	–	9	–
Rocky Palma (JAP)	–	–	3
Kermin Guardia (COL)	–	–	4
Hiroshi Nakajima (JAP)	–	–	5
Rocky Lim (TWN)	–	–	6
Alberto Rossel (PERU)	–	–	7
Surachai Saengmorokot (THAI)	–	–	10

The RING

CLASSIC

From THE RING, December 1978



Terry McGovern was the bantamweight champion of the world by the time he reached 19. Growing up on the hard streets of Brooklyn, New York, brought out the tough side of the little Irishman.

TERRIBLE TERRY McGOVERN— TERRIFIC PUNCHER!

By Sam Andre

(Editor's Note: This is the first part of a two-part series.)

This is a story about a great fighter, the immortal Terry McGovern, who became the world bantamweight champion at the age of 19. He won the world featherweight title and knocked out the lightweight champion in a non-title bout at 20, and was washed-up eight months after reaching his 21st birthday.

Joseph Terrence McGovern, born March 9, 1880, in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, was a solidly built, powerpunching little Irishman. He was a fair boxer who loved to wade into his opponents and destroy them, thereby building a reputation as "a killer."

His parents migrated to Brooklyn, New York, when McGovern was six months old. Growing up in a tough section of Brooklyn brought out McGovern's natural fighting instinct, and he soon became the top street-fighter in the area. McGovern was 14 when his father died. That meant he and Hughie, his next oldest brother, had to find a way to provide for his mother, sister Mary, and younger brothers Patsy, Jimmy, and Phil.

The breadwinners sold vegetables from a cart and did well for two years, until McGovern, through his friend Charley Mayhood, obtained a position as a stencil boy in the lumber yard of James Reagan. Within a month, McGovern had assembled a baseball team and, as captain, crossed bats with a team captained by Charley Malay for diamond honors and a purse of $15. Frequent disputes and bickering over decisions led the captains into a fistfight. With the battle a close one and neither gaining the upper hand, friends interfered and the game was declared a tie, the fight a draw. There were also skirmishes in the lumber yard over demands by wagon drivers that found McGovern coming to the aid of foreman Mayhood, who later was to become McGovern's trainer.

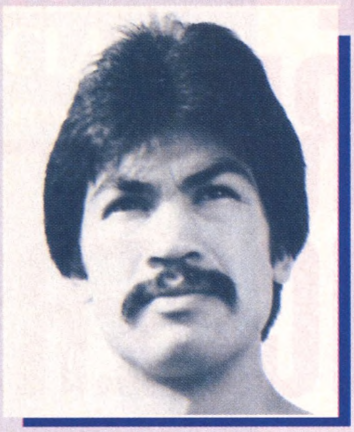
Charlie Mayhood, seated in the front, helped out McGovern, seated in the back, when he was younger, getting him a job as a stencil boy in a lumber yard. He would later become the champ's trainer.

Mayhood had always sensed that McGovern had the makings of a top fighter and offered to train him for a pro career. McGovern wavered. He did, however, join the Jackson Athletic Club of Brooklyn and, for the first time, donned boxing gloves. A few weeks later, 16-year-old McGovern entered an amateur tournament in the 105-pound class. After eliminating six opponents, he won the championship with ease and was awarded a gold watch.

McGovern started his pro career at 17, winning 12 fights, two by knockout, and drawing two.

At 18, in 1898, he won 11 bouts, eight by kayo, most prominent being highly regarded George Munroe in 24 rounds at Coney Island, New York, on June 11. He had bat-

THE RING RATINGS, December 1978



Carlos Palomino

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Muhammad Ali, Chicago, IL
1. **Larry Holmes**, Easton, PA
2. **Leon Spinks**, St. Louis, MO
3. **Ken Norton**, San Diego, CA
4. **Ron Lyle**, Denver, CO
5. **Jimmy Young**, Philadelphia, PA
6. **Kallie Knoetze**, South Africa
7. **Alfredo Evangelista**, Spain
8. **Gerrie Coetzee**, South Africa
9. **Ossie Ocasio**, Puerto Rico
10. **Domingo D'Elia**, Argentina

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Mike Rossman**, Turnersville, NJ
2. **Mate Parlov**, Yugoslavia
3. **Yaqui Lopez**, Stockton, CA
4. **Victor Galindez**, Argentina
5. **John Conteh**, England
6. **Matt Franklin**, Philadelphia, PA
7. **Mustapha Wassaja**, Uganda
8. **Eddie Gregory**, Brooklyn, NY
9. **Vonzell Johnson**, Columbus, OH
10. **Bobby Cassidy**, Long Island, NY

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Hugo Corro, Argentina
1. **Marvin Hagler**, Brockton, MA
2. **Mike Colbert**, Portland, OR
3. **Vito Antuofermo**, Italy
4. **Ronnie Harris**, Akron, OH
5. **Marcos Geraldo**, Mexico
6. **Bennie Briscoe**, Philadelphia, PA
7. **Gratien Tonna**, France
8. **Norberto Cabrera**, Argentina
9. **Tony Chiaverini**, Kansas City, MO
10. **Loucif Hamani**, Algeria

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Masashi Kudo, Japan
1. **Ayub Kalule**, Uganda
2. **Eddie Gazo**, Nicaragua
3. **Rocky Mattioli**, Australia
4. **Maurice Hope**, England
5. **Edgar Ross**, Orlando, FL
6. **Alvin Anderson**, Baltimore, MD
7. **Frank Wissenbach**, Germany
8. **Miguel Angel Castellini**, Argentina
9. **Ray Phillips**, Dallas, TX
10. **Elisha Obed**, Bahamas

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Carlos Palomino, Mexico
1. **Jose Cuevas**, Mexico
2. **Clyde Gray**, Canada
3. **Pete Ranzany**, Sacramento, CA
4. **Randy Shields**, Los Angeles, CA
5. **Harold Weston**, New York, NY
6. **Johnny Gant**, Washington, D.C.
7. **Andy Price**, Los Angeles, CA
8. **Ray Leonard**, Baltimore, MD
9. **Floyd Mayweather**, Grand Rapids, MI
10. **Scott Clark**, Orlando, FL

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Wilfred Benitez, Puerto Rico
1. **Antonio Cervantes**, Colombia
2. **Saensak Muangsurin**, Thailand
3. **Miguel Montilla**, Dominican Republic
4. **Esteban DeJesus**, Puerto Rico
5. **Jimmy Heair**, Memphis, TN
6. **Saoul Mamby**, New York, NY
7. **David Green**, England
8. **Domingo Ayala**, Puerto Rico
9. **Bruce Curry**, Los Angeles, CA
10. **Joe Kimpauani**, Zaire

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Roberto Duran, Panama
1. **Alfredo Pitalua**, Colombia
2. **Giancarlo Usai**, Italy
3. **Vilomar Fernandez**, Dominican Republic
4. **Claude Noel**, Trinidad
5. **Edwin Viruet**, Puerto Rico
6. **Jim Watt**, Scotland
7. **Johnny Lira**, Chicago, IL
8. **Termite Watkins**, Houston, TX
9. **Andrew Ganigan**, Honolulu, HI
10. **Herman Montes**, Los Angeles, CA

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Samuel Serrano, Puerto Rico
1. **Alfredo Escalera**, Puerto Rico
2. **Frankie Baltazar**, Los Angeles, CA
3. **Alexis Arguello**, Nicaragua
4. **Rafael Limon**, Mexico
5. **Arturo Leon**, Phoenix, AZ
6. **Walter Seeley**, Long Island, NY
7. **Juan Malvarez**, Argentina
8. **Natlio Vezzoli**, Italy
9. **Bobby Chacon**, Los Angeles, CA
10. **Warren Matthews**, New Orleans, LA

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Danny Lopez**, Los Angeles, CA
2. **Eusebio Pedroza**, Panama
3. **Wilfredo Gomez**, Puerto Rico
4. **Ruben Castillo**, Bakersfield, CA
5. **Cecilio Lastra**, Spain
6. **Sean O'Grady**, Oklahoma City, OK
7. **Ricardo Cardone**, Venezuela
8. **Roberto Gastanon**, Spain
9. **Hector Carrasquilla**, Panama
10. **Leo Cruz**, Dominican Republic

BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champ: Jorge Lujan, Panama
1. **Carlos Zarate**, Mexico
2. **Al Sandoval**, Los Angeles, CA
3. **Lupe Pintor**, Mexico
4. **Richard Rozelle**, Columbia, OH
5. **Franco Zurlo**, Italy
6. **Alfredo Davila**, Los Angeles, CA
7. **Roberto Rubaldino**, Mexico
8. **Alfonso Zamora**, Mexico
9. **Frank Duarte**, Los Angeles, CA
10. **Alfredo Mulas**, Italy

FLYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Miguel Canto, Mexico
1. **Netrnoi Vorasinghi**, Thailand
2. **Yoko Gushiken**, Japan
3. **Betulio Gonzalez**, Venezuela
4. **Guty Espadas**, Mexico
5. **Franco Udella**, Italy
6. **Freddy Castillo**, Mexico
7. **Jose Ortiz**, Puerto Rico
8. **Charlie Magri**, England
9. **Luis Estaba**, Venezuela
10. **Bernabe Villacampo**, Philippines

tled Munroe to a 20-round draw a month earlier. Then he lost on a foul to Tim Callahan, a Brooklyn rival, on July 23.

The Callahan bout indicated that McGovern had one weak spot as a fighter—a tendency to lose his temper, which later in his career proved to be costly. The bout was conducted with a stipulation there would be "clean breaks" with no hitting in the clinches. Callahan's sharp straight left held McGovern at bay until the ninth round when he began to weaken under powerful shots to the body. During a clinch in the 10th round, Callahan, tired and on the verge of being knocked out, uttered an insulting remark that transformed McGovern into a raging maniac.

Instead of breaking cleanly, McGovern wrapped his left arm around Callahan's neck, pulled him forward, and smashed his opponent's face with right-hand blows. Referee Frank Herold stepped in and declared

McGovern poses with manager Sam Harris, who is best remembered for his career as a theatrical producer. He was associated with P.G. Sullivan and Al H. Woods, producers of the Patsy Bolivar shows with Billy B. Van, who later partnered James J. Corbett in a vaudeville act.

Callahan winner on a foul. The following month they fought a 10-round draw, and on November 19, Callahan was flattened in 10 rounds.

In 1899, the 19-year-old destroyer had a super year, winning 17 battles, 15 by knockout (the last 13 consecutively), which included the annihilation of Pedlar Palmer for the bantamweight crown.

The best men in the division were beaten by McGovern that year. His first victim was the clever veteran scrapper, Casper Leon, who was counted out in the 12th round on January 30. On March 12, he kayoed flashy Patsy Haley, who later became one of New York's top referees, and on April 28, he won a 25-round contest from Joe Bernstein.

McGovern started a string of 18 knockouts on May 26, kayoing Sammy Kelly in five rounds, followed by Billy Barrett on June 8 in 10 rounds, and Johnny Ritchie on July 1 in three. His fourth straight victim, Palmer, England's champion, proved to be his easiest.

On the afternoon of September 12, McGovern became the world's bantamweight champion, battering down Palmer in the first round in an outdoor arena at Tuckahoe, New York. His young wife, the former Grace Smalley, holding two-month-old Joey, watched the activity from a nearby house overlooking the arena.

Prior to the international contest, the boys agreed to divide the $10,000 purse, each to receive $5,000 win or lose. After the ring was cleared of preliminary action, Palmer walked down the aisle with a buddy carrying aloft a British flag as the band struck up "God Save The Queen." The crowd applauded. All pandemonium broke loose as McGovern appeared with his 12-year-old brother Phil, who carried a silk American flag, to the tune of "The Star Spangled Banner."

The late Nat Fleischer had this to say about the knockout, in his book, *Terrible Terry, The Brooklyn Terror*: "The battle was a tremendous surprise, not only because of its swift ending with McGovern scoring a quick, spectacular knockout, but because Palmer was renowned as a super crafty ring general.

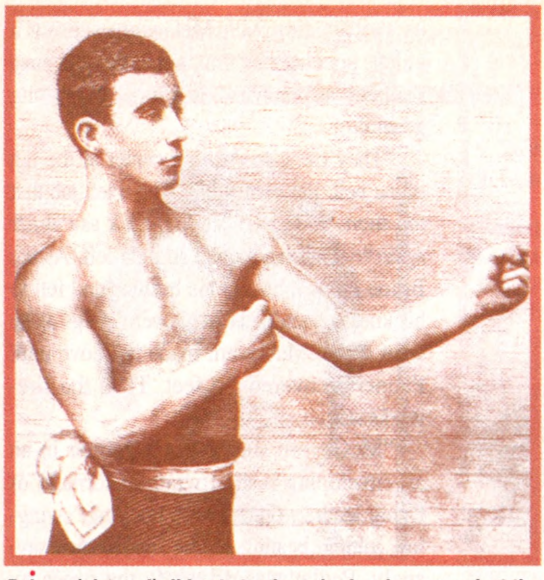
"They came to the ring center at the tap of the bell, Palmer leading with a left jab that fell short. McGovern stepped back as Palmer again tried an ineffectual straight left. As the Briton missed, he lost his balance and fell to his knees, catching at McGovern's legs as he went down. McGovern made no move until Palmer recovered his feet. Then the fireworks started.

"McGovern surged upon Palmer in an all-enveloping rush, a wrathful tornado of flying leather, both gloves hooking, swinging, jolting, beating on the Englishman savagely. Pedlar was driven to the ropes by bodyblows. In vain he tried to swap punches. His returns didn't stem the storm breaking over him. He put all he had in desperate wallops to McGovern's head, but without avail.

"McGovern had smiled once—when the battle began. Then his mouth had shut like a steel trap as he stalked his prey like a fighting pit-terrier, his jaws set in bulldog viciousness. He must have known at that stage of the proceedings the battle wouldn't last long, for his speed increased, his battering swings grew faster and more furious, and Palmer was wilting under the punishment.

"The little Englishman couldn't escape by footwork. McGovern had him cornered.

Grace McGovern watched from a nearby house as her husband battered bantamweight champ Pedlar Palmer on September 12, 1899. Both fighters agreed to an even split of the $10,000 purse.



Palmer (pictured) did not stand much of a chance against the aggressive McGovern. "Terrible Terry" became champ by using superior footwork and cornering his opponent. McGovern finished Palmer just 2:32 into the first round.

But there came a momentary respite for the hapless visiting boxer, for suddenly the bell rang and McGovern checked his reign of blows.

"It was an accident. The official at the bell had let the hammer slip, giving a false signal. Referee George Siler realized quickly that a mistake had been made and sent the fighters into action again. The incident had no bearing on the battle except to prolong it by 15 seconds.

"Obedient to Siler's command, McGovern sailed in again. One headlong rush and he had Palmer pinned against the ropes, where he battered the Englishman with both hands. Pedlar brought every trick he knew into play. He tried to block those whistling punches with elbows and forearms. He endeavored to roll his head with them and rob the terrific wallops of their force. But it was all in vain. A flush left-right to the jaw sent Palmer down.

"He was badly dazed and horribly bewildered, so much so that he only took six seconds of the count before slowly rising. His legs trembled as he shuffled along the ropes.

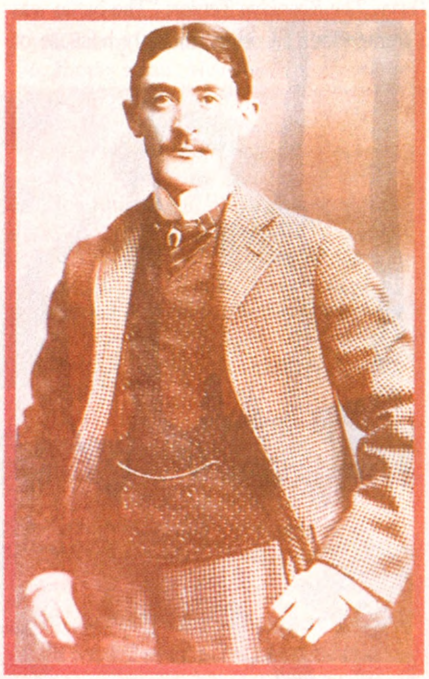
"Terry was on him like a flash, shooting in rips to the body. Palmer clinched and McGovern beat him loose from the grip. Terry closed in, pounded the Englishman's body again with devastating punches. Palmer's knees bent. Terry hooked a stiff left to the stomach and followed with a stunning overhand right on the jaw. Palmer dropped in a stricken heap. Siler began to count. Palmer was in pain. He writhed and turned partly over on his side. He attempted to get off the canvas, but could not raise his weakened body even with the help of his hands. His eyes were glazed, but no blood was visible on his face. His features were those of a person whose physical faculties are temporarily suspended from a shock to the nerve centers, as was probably the case.

"Siler counted the fatal 10. Palmer still lay prostrate. McGovern had beaten the English champion and annexed the world's bantamweight title in exactly two minutes, 32 seconds of fighting."

McGovern continued his kayo streak on September 29, putting away Fred Snyder in two rounds and finishing off Billy Rotchford in one, 10 days later.

Meanwhile, Lou Houseman, a boxing promoter who staged matches in the Tattersall arena at Chicago, worked out a plan with Sam Harris, McGovern's manager, to have McGovern meet two men in six-round encounters on the same night.

The opponents who agreed to meet McGovern on November 18 were Patsy Haley, who had stayed 18 rounds with McGovern eight months earlier, and "Turkey Point" Billy Smith, a shrewd boxer with a potent left hook.



It was Harris (pictured), along with boxing promoter Lou Houseman, who hatched the scheme of McGovern meeting two men in six-round encounters on the same night. Patsy Haley lasted less than one round, and "Turkey Point" Billy Smith was finished in the third.

First to face the champion was Haley, who had planned to outbox McGovern for six rounds. But McGovern never gave him the chance. In a furious two-fisted attack, he dropped Patsy with a short right to the chin. Up at seven, Haley was pinned to the ropes, where three well-placed shots sent him to the canvas completely out.

Newly found clippings in THE RING files reveal the bout ended after 1 minute 40 seconds of fighting and set the bantamweight championship time record.

A printer's error in *The Ring Boxing Encyclopedia*, which lists the 37 quickest endings from flyweights to heavies, states the McGovern-Palmer fight, which is said in that book to have ended at 1:15, is the record. Actually, that bout rates fifth in time. McGovern-Haley is first with 1:40, followed by Sixto Escobar-Indian Quintana, 1:49; Jimmy Carruthers-Vic Toweel, 2:19; Al Brown-Spider Pladner, 2:21, and McGovern-Palmer, 2:32.

Turkey Point Smith also had a plan. He made a deal with a bookmaker who promised him $500 if he would last four rounds. In that event, the bookie stood to win $4,500 in bets.

Smith managed to get through the first round, dancing around the ring, avoiding McGovern's rushes, and refusing to fight. McGovern came out for the second round raging. He cornered Smith and knocked him down seven times, but Smith hung on.

In the third, after referee Siler warned him he would be disqualified if he continued not to fight back, Smith let loose a wild swing that landed on McGovern's ear. In a flash, McGovern saw an opening and dropped Smith with a left hook to the jaw. Smith got up groggy at the count of nine, and McGovern's blows put an end to the bout, including Turkey Point's promised $500 bonus.

On November 30, Eddie Sprague became McGovern's ninth consecutive kayo. His 10th was over James J. Corbett Jr., on December 12. Both knockouts were in two rounds.

The box office bonanza of McGovern's double opponents at Chicago prompted Ohio promoters to set up a similar duo at Cincinnati. Charlie Mason and Freckles

McGovern scored his 14th straight kayo when he won the featherweight title over champ George Dixon (pictured). Terrible Terry gradually wore down Dixon to score an eighth-round knockout.

O'Brien were the victims on December 18. Mason went out in two rounds, Freckles in one. Both were third-raters.

Four days later, Harry Forbes, the best of the challengers, was knocked out in two rounds, and it proved that no bantamweight had a chance against "Terrible Terry."

Forbes, previously stopped by McGovern in 15 rounds on October 1, 1898, waged a cagey first round, but in the second, he made a mistake—he was knocked down, got up, attempted to slug with McGovern, and was knocked cold.

Having cleaned up the division and finding it difficult making weight, manager Harris informed the press that McGovern would give up the bantamweight crown and challenge the great featherweight champ, George Dixon.

The 21-year-old sensation began the new century with a big bang, scoring his 14th straight kayo—this one, over Dixon in eight rounds on January 9, for the featherweight championship.

An overflow crowd at the Broadway Athletic Club watched Dixon apply his old-time skill in the early stages of the 25-round bout. Dixon blocked McGovern's blows with ease and countered with straight lefts, continuously snapping McGovern's head back and knocking him off-balance. McGovern missed with blows to the head, but in close, he scored with powerful bodypunches.

Dixon was far out in front in the fourth round, counterpunching with force, but McGovern, head down, kept boring in with a body attack. Dixon began to weaken. From that point on, it was only a matter of time when he would collapse.

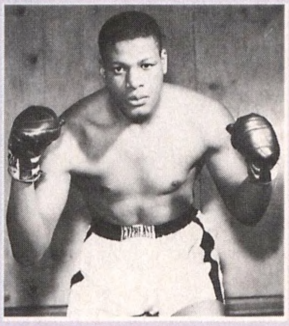
In the eighth round, McGovern was connecting with vicious punches to the head, while Dixon, as Fleischer relates in *Terrible Terry*, "was fading fast, staggering, groping blindly, as Terry kept driving in determinedly for the kill. Then, suddenly, from Dixon's corner, a sponge was thrown into the ring. It fell at the referee's feet and that official dashed between the reeling Dixon and tense scowling McGovern, who was about to deliver the coup de grace." ■

(Part two will appear in the April 2000 issue of THE RING.)

THE RING, December 1978

The Cover: "The Carnival Of Champions" was a spectacular event at the New Orleans Superdome, attracting 70,000 spectators. The card featured four title bouts, including Muhammad Ali becoming the first three-time heavyweight champion with a unanimous decision over Leon Spinks. Also on the show, Mike Rossman won the WBA light heavyweight title from Victor Galindez, Danny "Little Red" Lopez retained the WBC featherweight belt against Juan Malvarez, and WBA bantam champ Jorge Lujan beat Alberto Davila.

Riotous Result: A riot broke out at Madison Square Garden after Vito Antuofermo clearly outpointed Puerto Rico's Willie Classen over 10 rounds. The decision in favor of Antuofermo was not popular among Classen's supporters, who showed their disapproval by throwing bottles and chairs.



The Gentle Giant: THE RING recalled the career of Cuban heavyweight Nino Valdes, a top contender in the 1950s, after a writer ran into "The Gentle Giant" working the door of a strip club on Broadway. The 54-year-old Valdes looked in great shape, but hinted that his health was not as good as it appeared.

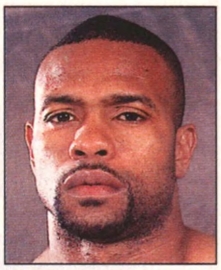
Hello, "Hit Man": THE RING introduced a tall, lean slugger from Detroit, Michigan, who had won his first 11 fights by knockout—all inside of four rounds. People were comparing 19-year-old Tommy Hearns to a young Sugar Ray Robinson after he destroyed veteran Eddie Marcelle in two rounds.

Fighter Of The Month: At 36 years old, the great Ali showed he still had something left by outpointing Spinks in their rematch to win the heavyweight championship for an unprecedented third time. It would turn out to be the final victory of Ali's Hall of Fame career and, in turn, the last of his many Fighter of the Month honors.

LOOKING AHEAD

By Eric Raskin

BIG PLANS FOR BOXING'S BIG THREE



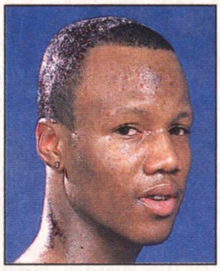
Jones: One of HBO's busy stars

Quick question: How many fights were shown live on free network television in 2000? Equally quick answer: just one, the first **Jose Luis Castillo-Stevie Johnston** fight on ABC. But here's another question: Do you really care?

If you're a serious boxing fan, and chances are that if you're reading this magazine you are, you have cable-TV, and you probably pay for HBO and Showtime, or at least know somebody you can leech off of most Saturday nights. It doesn't matter to you which channel a fight is on, as long as it's on. And it's certainly going to be on in 2001, as the three major American boxing networks, HBO, Showtime, and ESPN2, all have promising plans for the new year.

Over at HBO, the stars will definitely be out in the first couple of months of the year.

"With the exception of **Oscar De La Hoya**, who I hope will be back doing what he does best soon, a lot of our star attractions are fighting in this time period," said HBO Sports Vice President of Programming **Kery Davis**. "It really started in late-2000 with **Lennox Lewis-David Tua** and **Felix Trinidad-Fernando Vargas**, and our schedule is filled with stars until March."



Judah: Looking to unify on Showtime

On January 13, **Michael Grant** returns to *Boxing After Dark*, followed by **Roy Jones** on the 20th in Tampa, Florida, the weekend before the Super Bowl comes to that city. On February 17, a doubleheader featuring **Floyd Mayweather** (vs. **Alejandro Gonzalez**) and **Diego Corrales** (vs. Castillo) is planned, and a week later, **Sugar Shane Mosley** makes another trip to New York City, possibly against **Arturo Gatti**, though other, more competitive opponents are being considered. But if big names alone aren't enough to satisfy you—and they shouldn't be—HBO is putting together a truly big fight on March 3, when **Naseem Hamed** meets **Marco Antonio Barrera**.

And it's not just about the superstars. On January 27, *KO Nation* kicks off its second year with the pro debuts of a handful of U.S. Olympians, including silver medalist **Ricardo Williams Jr.** and bronze medalist **Jermain Taylor**.

Over at chief rival Showtime, the stars are also on display, but the most prevalent theme is title unification. IBF junior welter champ **Zab Judah** will make a title defense on January 13, and Showtime boss **Jay Larkin's** plan is to start unifying the belts at that weight shortly thereafter.

"I want to do either Judah vs. **Sharmba Mitchell** with the winner to fight **Kostya Tszyu**, or Tszyu vs. Mitchell with the winner to fight Judah," Larkin said. "If we end up with Judah vs. Tszyu to unify three belts, that's a definite highlight of the first half of 2001."

Larkin is also looking for partial unification at 130 pounds. If WBA champ **Joel Casamayor** gets by a dangerous defense against **Roberto Garcia** early in the year, Larkin plans to pair the Cuban with WBO champ **Acelino Freitas**. And at bantamweight, Larkin is optimistic that **Don King** and **Bob Arum** will come together to make **Tim Austin** vs. **Paulie Ayala**.

King: Doing business with The Deuce

In fights that have nothing to do with unification, Showtime has January 20 reserved for either **Evander Holyfield** (possibly in a rematch with **John Ruiz**) or **Mike Tyson** (possibly against **David Izon**). And Larkin also says several Olympians will make their pro debuts on *his* network's air in January or February, with silver medalist **Rocky Juarez** rumored to be among them.

But the biggest developments of the new year in televised boxing are going on at ESPN2. The major news is that, due to both the ratings success of *Friday Night Fights* and the lighter sports schedule once the NBA and NHL seasons end, "The Deuce" is planning to launch a 13-week Tuesday night boxing series from May through August.

"This wasn't a spur of the moment thing," said **Bob Yalen**, ESPN2's boxing coordinator. "We wanted to do this two summers ago, and last summer, but it didn't come together. But the ratings have been rock solid on *Friday Night Fights*, and the time is right now to try a second show." The show will be different from *FNF* in that it will be two hours long and won't have a studio segment. The broadcast team was still up in the air as of press time.

Another major development at ESPN2 is that *FNF* will be televising shows promoted by Don King for the first time in 2001. On January 12, undefeated King heavyweight **Nate Jones** takes on another unbeaten prospect, **Joe Mesi**, and King has also suggested that an excellent matchup between junior welters **Randall Bailey** and **Terronn Millett** may end up on The Deuce. ■

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